

# Concordia Theological Monthly

---

Vol. XVI

APRIL, 1945

No. 4

---

## Objective Justification

The doctrine of justification is rightly regarded to be the central doctrine of the Scriptures. All other teachings of the Bible either point to it, or they radiate from it. We can understand neither the work of Christ's redemption nor the work of the Spirit's sanctification if we do not understand the doctrine of justification. Luther calls it "diesen einigen und festen Felsen," and says: "In meinem Herzen herrscht allein dieser Artikel, naemlich der Glaube on Christum, aus welchem, durch welchen und zu welchem alle meine theologischen Gedanken fliesen und zurueckfliessen." (Luthers Vorrede zum Galaterbrief, St. Louis, IX:9.) Let no one, then, count it time lost which he spends in the study of this fundamental doctrine of our faith.

**By his own works no man is justified before God.** — According to the teachings of the Bible "there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not," Eccl. 7:20; "they are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one," Ps. 14:3. Therefore "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men," Rom. 1:18, and all the world is guilty before God, Rom. 3:19. By sin, man departed from God, the source of all his joy and happiness, and brought upon himself misery and unspeakable woe.

The reason of natural man now argues that, as by his own fault he became guilty before God, he must and can by his own efforts also become righteous before Him; all that is necessary for him to do is to keep the Law, for it is written, "The doers of the Law shall be justified," Rom. 2:13. Indeed, the Law is holy, just, and good, Rom. 7:12, and he that keeps its commandments shall surely live by them, Rom. 10:5. The Law shows a perfect way to righteousness and life. Still Paul tells us, "By the deeds of the Law there

shall no flesh be justified," Rom. 3:20. The fault, however, lies not with the Law, but with us. For the Law is made weak through our flesh, Rom. 8:3. Our carnal mind is opposed to the Law, and therefore we cannot please God, Rom. 8:7, 8; even our righteousnesses in the eyes of the Holy One are as filthy rags, Is. 64:6. Only if we could rid ourselves of the guilt inherited from Adam, Rom. 5:19, could eradicate from our nature the original depravity, Rom. 7:18, could keep the whole Law, and not offend in one point, James 2:10, only then could we be declared just according to the Law. But as no man on earth is able to render such perfect obedience, the words of Paul remain true, "By the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified."

Yet God is not willing that any should perish, 2 Pet. 3:9. Therefore He provided a way by which all sinners can escape from the wrath to come and inherit eternal life.

**God reconciled the world unto Himself.** — We read 2 Cor. 5:19, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." God did not reconcile Himself to the world by simply overlooking the sins of men and receiving them back into communion with Himself without full atonement being made. However, it was not man that made an atonement for his own sins, but God did it for man. God reconciled the world unto Himself by setting the world right with Himself, in exacting full satisfaction for the shortcomings of man. This He did in Christ, 2 Cor. 5:18; Rom. 5:10, who by His active and passive obedience made full amends for the trespasses of all men, 1 John 2:2, and thus satisfied all demands of God's holiness and justice against sinful mankind. While the wrath of God against sin itself continues as before, Ps. 5:4, there was by this reconciliation effected a change in the mind and attitude of God towards sinners. His righteous wrath was appeased by the blood of His Son, 1 John 2:2 (ἱλασμός, from ἱλάσκομαι, which means to appease the wrath, to conciliate). Because of the redemption by Christ there is now in God "good will toward men."

**Nonimputation of sin the immediate effect of reconciliation.** — Accepting the sacrifice of His Son for the reconciliation of the world, God did not impute their trespasses unto them, 2 Cor. 5:19. The reconciliation by Christ did not merely dispose God, or make Him willing, not to impute sins at some future time and under certain conditions; the nonimputation of sins is in our text not presented as merely purposed and intended, but as a fact which took place right then and there; it was the immediate effect of the reconciliation. It is definitely contrary to the words of our text to make them say that by the reconciliation the nonimputation of sins was made possible and that man must repent and believe before this possibility becomes an actuality. This nonimputation

of sins was not merely planned for the future, but it is a finished act of God, which does not repeat itself every time a sinner comes to faith. For in the main clause, "God *was* in Christ," the verb is in the past tense; hence the following participles, "reconciling the world," and "not imputing their trespasses unto them," must also be understood as having happened in the past. Therefore we are justified in saying that when God accepted the redemptive work of His Son, He did not impute to men on earth their trespasses. The nonimputation is an accomplished fact. Furthermore, this nonimputation did not pertain to certain individuals only, e.g., only to those who would believe; for the pronoun "them" refers to the world, to all people in the world. This nonimputation therefore is universal in its scope; it includes Jews and Gentiles, Christians and infidels, Peter and Judas, you and me.

In our thinking we indeed differentiate between redemption, reconciliation, and justification, as Paul does in 2 Cor. 5:19. But we may not separate them nor change the order in which they are named, for they are as closely related to each other as cause and effect. By the work of redemption Christ achieved our reconciliation unto God, and the immediate effect of this reconciliation was the nonimputation of our sins, or our justification. Thus without the redemption by Christ there could be no reconciliation and no justification, and justification presupposes the reconciliation and the atonement by Christ. We may not think of one and forget the other two, for they are connected as three links in a chain. When Paul tells us that we are justified by the blood of Christ, Rom. 5:9, he includes the reconciliation; and when he tells us that we are reconciled by His death, Rom. 5:10, this includes our justification. Because Christ lived and died for us, that is why we are reconciled to God, and because we are reconciled to God, that is why He does not impute our trespasses to us.

**Not to impute sins means to forgive sins, to justify.** — According to Webster "to impute" means "to charge, as a fault; theologically, to ascribe vicariously." As men had sinned, their trespasses should have been charged against them; but vicariously God imputed them to Christ, whom He made to be sin for us, 2 Cor. 5:21. Not to impute trespasses, then, can only mean that the sins are not charged against a person. But an offense that is not reckoned, charged, and held against one is forgiven. Not to impute sins therefore means to forgive sins, to acquit, to absolve. This fully agrees with the Scriptures, for in Rom. 4:7, 8 we read: "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Here Paul uses the terms "to forgive iniquities" and "not to impute sin" as synonymous, both terms describing the identical act.

When, therefore, Paul in 2 Cor. 5:19 tells us that God did not impute their trespasses unto the men in the world, this can only mean that God forgave the sins of all men and absolved them from all their transgressions. It has been argued that we may possibly say that God forgave all sins, but that we may not say that He forgave all sins to all men, may not say, "dass Gott den Suedern insgemein die Suenden vergeben hat," because that would imply that forgiveness is also imparted to, and bestowed on, all sinners. We answer, in the first place, that is not the necessary connotation of this term; in the second place, Paul uses a similar term, saying, "not imputing their trespasses unto them." The question of the offer, the acceptance, and the bestowal of forgiveness does not enter in at this stage of the discussion. Of these we shall speak later. Here we wish to point out that "not to impute sin" means "to forgive sin"; and since the nonimputation of sin took place when God reconciled the world unto Himself, the forgiving of sins also took place at that time.

But Paul uses another term as synonymous with "forgiving iniquities" and "not imputing sin," namely, "to impute righteousness without works." We see this from 2 Cor. 5:21, where we are told that our sins were charged to Christ for the purpose that in Him we might be made righteous. Thus we have this blessed exchange that our sins were laid on Jesus and His righteousness is credited to us. But if God imputed to men "righteousness without works," then He certainly regarded, accounted, and declared them righteous and just; in other words, He justified them.

This also appears from Rom. 5:9: "being now justified by His blood." Here the same word and form is used as in v. 1, "being justified by faith." Yet both verses do not speak of the same matter. In v. 1 we are told how we *obtained* this righteousness and entered into personal possession of what Christ achieved for us. But in v. 9 we learn how Christ *achieved* righteousness and justification. Christ died for the ungodly, v. 6, He shed His blood for many for the remission of sins, Matt. 26:28, and ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ we are justified; that means, because by His blood and death He made full atonement for all our sins, God has in view thereof declared and pronounced all of us just and righteous. To be sure, in our thinking we can differentiate between the suffering and death of Christ and the resultant reconciliation and the nonimputation of sins, or the justification of the sinner. But these are so closely and intimately connected that we may not separate them. And as the blood of Christ is the *causa efficiens* of it all, Paul can very properly say that we were justified by His blood. Now, all this did not happen during our lifetime. It does not happen only then when a man comes to faith; but "while we were yet sinners," "when we



were enemies," vv. 8, 10, Christ died for us and justified us by His blood. This justification by the blood of Christ therefore took place before we came to faith, before we were born. Moreover, as Christ died for all men, 2 Cor. 5:15, the power and efficacy of His blood and death resulted in the justification of all men. "Christus ist fuer alle gottlosen Menschen gestorben, hat sie alle durch seinen Tod gerechtfertigt." (Stoeckhardt, *Roemerbrief*, p. 227.) Accepting the precious blood and innocent suffering and death of His beloved Son as payment in full for the sins of men, God adjudged and accounted all men just and righteous in His sight. It is true that by faith man must apply and appropriate to himself this forgiveness and this justifying sentence of God; yet this is impossible if forgiveness and justification are not accomplished facts before he can by faith apply them to himself.

It must therefore be admitted that "not to impute sins," "to forgive sins," "to impute righteousness," "to justify," are synonymous terms. They all describe the same act of God, though they view it from different angles. If sins are not imputed, they are forgiven; and if they are forgiven, then man is accounted just and righteous. And all this happened in the court of heaven when God accepted the sacrifice of His Son for the reconciliation of the world.

**Justification a judicial act of God.** — Justification is not a moral transformation, a renewal of life, meaning that a wicked man by a change of conduct becomes a good and just man; justification is not sanctification. The Greek word δικαιούν is a juridical term and means "to make just, to pronounce and treat as righteous, to justify," (Liddell & Scott). Such judicial action may be based on the works a man has done, as in Rom. 2:13: "The doers of the Law shall be justified." This means that if a man has complied with the demands of the Law, he will be regarded and declared just. But it may also be based on what someone else has done for us and in our place, and whose merit is imputed and credited to us, as in Rom. 3:24: "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," and in Rom. 5:9: "Being now justified by His blood." Here man is made and declared just not because of what he has done, but because of the vicarious atonement of Christ. What Christ, his Substitute, has done for him is reckoned to him for righteousness, and thus he is made and becomes righteous by imputation. In view of what Christ, whom God had made to be sin for us, 2 Cor. 5:21, had done and suffered for all mankind God no longer imputed their sins to them, but forgave them and imputed to them the merits of their Substitute; He adjudged all men righteous, He justified them. This justification therefore is an act of God that takes place outside of man. It pro-

duces no change in the individual, does not make him personally more righteous in his life; it simply alters his status before God. Man is not declared just after he himself has become just in his life; but while he was yet a sinner, Rom. 5:8, while he was yet ungodly, Rom. 4:5, God justified him by grace for Christ's sake. Justification is a judgment, a sentence, of God regarding man, a sentence which is not in the least based on any merit or worthiness in man, but solely on the grace of God in Christ; a sentence which, while it pertains to man, lies, up to this point, outside of his knowledge and experience, for it was passed in the privacy of God's council. And only when God reveals this gracious judgment to us, as He does in the Gospel, may we know of it and trust in it for our salvation.

**Universal, or objective, justification.**—This justifying judgment of God described above covers all men. Again we call attention to 2 Cor. 5:19, where we are told that in Christ God reconciled the *world* to Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, which means that for Christ's sake He adjudged all men righteous. From Rom. 5:8, 9 we learned that Jesus died for us while we were yet sinners and that by His blood we are justified. As Christ died not only for the believers but for all the "ungodly," v. 6; 2 Cor. 5:15, all the ungodly were by His blood justified before God. As little as we may limit the redemption of Christ to certain individuals, so little may we limit the immediate effect of this redemption, namely, justification, to these individuals; by the blood of Christ all men were justified.

In Rom. 4:25 we read: "Who [Christ] was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." In the preceding verses, 9-24, Paul speaks of those whose faith is reckoned for righteousness; but what he says there is based on what he says in v. 25. For if Christ had not been raised for their justification, their faith could not be reckoned unto them for righteousness, they would still be in their sins, and their faith would be vain, 1 Cor. 15:17. We may not limit v. 25 to believers only, and the word "our" in our text does not refer to those people only to whom these words were addressed, including Paul himself. For we know from the Bible that Christ bore the sins of the whole world, John 1:29, and that He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, 1 John 2:2. If, then, He was delivered for the offenses of all men, then His resurrection also must mean something to all men. And what does it mean? "Our justification." The resurrection of Christ is positive evidence that by His blood and death He reconciled all those to God for whose offenses He was delivered, Rom. 5:10, and justified all those for whom He died, Rom. 5:8, 9. This text therefore proves the universal justification of all mankind. It is true,

if the individual is to have and enjoy the blessings and benefits of this justification, he must in faith trust in, and accept for himself, what Christ has achieved for him. Yet it is apparent that before he can *believe* that he is justified before God, he *has been justified*.

Let us also look at Rom. 5:12-19. Running through this entire section there are two principal thoughts that are contrasted to each other. The one is that by the disobedience of one, of Adam, all men were by imputation made sinners, v. 19 a, and that because of Adam's sin the condemnation of death came upon all men, v. 18 a. The other thought, parallel to the first, is that "the grace of God hath abounded unto many," v. 15. Let us note the tense of the verb: not "shall abound" or "may possibly abound," but "hath abounded." Now, in what way? By Christ's obedience many were by imputation constituted, set down, as righteous, v. 19 b, and because of His righteousness, justification of life came upon all men, v. 18 b. The word "many" in this section refers to all, as may be clearly seen from vv. 12 and 15, and vv. 18 and 19, where both words are used interchangeably. Neither should the future tense in v. 19 b disturb us; for this is not a temporal future, meaning that at some future time many shall be made righteous, but it is a logical (gnomic) future, meaning that if it is true that by the disobedience of one many were made sinners, then it will follow that by the obedience of Christ many shall be made righteous. And this "much more" so since the grace of God "hath abounded unto many," v. 15. If the offense of one had such far-reaching effect as to bring the judgment of death upon all men, much more will the righteousness of Christ result in the justification of life unto all men. It is absolutely arbitrary and without foundation in text and context if we restrict "all men" and "many" to the believers and read v. 18 "By the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men 'that believe' unto justification of life," and v. 19: "By the obedience of one shall many 'that believe' be made righteous." This would simply destroy Paul's entire argument in this section; for the parallel thought, namely, that by Adam's sin all men were constituted sinners and were subject to the judgment of death, would have no meaning, no counterpart, if by the obedience and righteousness of Christ not all men were constituted righteous and justified. We know full well that man is justified by faith, Rom. 3:28, and we shall discuss that later, but that does not give us the right to restrict the words "upon all men unto justification of life" in v. 18 to the believers alone. Nor may we weaken the statement in Rom. 5:18 to mean that "according to the intention" of God the righteousness of Christ was to result for all men unto justification of life, but that actually it does so only in case of the

believers. For as it is a fact that the offense of Adam resulted in the condemnation of death for all men, even so it is a fact that the righteousness of Christ resulted in the justification of life to all men. What Paul, therefore, teaches in this section is briefly this, that, as the sin of Adam brought upon all men the condemnation of death, so, and much more so, did the righteousness of Christ bring upon all men the justification of life.

These texts prove conclusively that the real and original gracious judgment of God by which sinners are absolved and accounted righteous is not limited to the believers, but covers all men. For this reason it is called *universal* justification. But it is also called *objective* justification. For though thereby all men are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, still not one sinner is, so far, personally benefited thereby in the sense that he has and enjoys what this justification implies. In fact, up to this point no one knows of it; much less can he trust in it. It all happened in the court of God in heaven. "Bei sich selbst, in seinem eigenen Forum, hat Gott aus Gnaden um Christi willen die gesamte Suenderwelt absolviert und fuer gerecht erklart." Because this act of God is here considered by itself, irrespective of how man would react to it, whether he would accept it and have and enjoy its blessings or whether he would reject it in unbelief, it is called objective justification. Even as we can present the doctrine of redemption objectively, stating exactly what Christ has done and won for all men, without pointing out that all this is ours by faith, so the Bible also presents objectively what God has done with all men because of this redemption in Christ, namely, that He no longer imputes their trespasses unto them, but has declared them all just and righteous. It is one thing what God for the sake of Christ has done with the whole world, and it is another thing what happens when the individual in faith apprehends this.

**Objective justification the basis of subjective justification.**—In his letters Paul stresses justification by faith, or, as it is commonly called, individual, or subjective, justification. And this is perfectly proper, for it is by faith, and by faith alone, that the individual applies to himself the gracious judgment of God, and thus gains personal possession and enjoyment of all it implies. Yet in the background of this justification by faith there is with Paul, and there must be with us, the doctrine of universal, or objective, justification.

**The Gospel the official proclamation of God's pardon and absolution to a sin-cursed world.**—In order that we may see more clearly in this matter, it may be helpful to distinguish between (a) the justifying act of God, (b) the proclamation of the gracious

judgment of God in the Gospel, (c) the acceptance of this proclamation on the part of the individual through faith.

In the preceding paragraphs our chief purpose was to establish the fact that God justified all sinners freely by grace through the redemption in Christ. This act of God happens not when a man comes to faith nor after he has come to faith, but it happened the moment that God accepted the sacrifice of His Son for the reconciliation of the world; it happened in the court of God in heaven, without the knowledge and experience of man, and irrespective of the attitude of man toward it. This act of God is not repeated, even as the redemption by Christ, on which it is based, is not repeated. The justifying sentence of God, by which He did not impute the sins to the people in the world but declared them just, stands and remains in force, even as a law once passed remains in force until it is abrogated.

Another matter is the proclamation of this sentence and the offer of all it implies. If nothing more had happened than this, that God by grace for Christ's sake had justified all sinners, if He had kept this judgment in the secret of His heart, then no man on earth could have any knowledge of what God had done for and with this sin-cursed world, nor could any man in this life ever be benefited thereby. What, in that case, God would hereafter have done with those whom He justified we do not know. However, God did not forgive the sins of men and justify the ungodly just for His own pleasure and satisfaction, but sinners were to be saved thereby. A governor does not pardon a convict to please himself, but to benefit the prisoner, and to this end he makes the pardon known to him. So also God makes known to the world what in His secret counsel He has resolved; He publishes His gracious judgment of justification. He not only reconciled the world unto Himself, but He "hath committed unto us the Word of Reconciliation," 2 Cor. 5:19. In the Gospel He reveals what otherwise would forever remain hidden from us, 1 Cor. 2:7-10. Here He tells us that He is not merely inclined and ready to forgive our sins and that He will do so if and when we believe; but He tells us that, since Christ has atoned for the sins of all men, 1 John 2:2, He does not impute them to the world, but has forgiven them for Christ's sake, who was delivered for all men's offenses and raised again for their justification, Rom. 4:25. For this reason Paul tells us that in the Gospel "is the righteousness of God revealed," Rom. 1:17, that is, the righteousness which Christ achieved for us, 2 Cor. 5:21; for this reason Christ tells us "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached among all nations," Luke 24:47; for this reason Paul said in his sermon at Antioch "that through this man



[Christ] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins," Acts 13:38. As far as the sins of men are concerned, the Gospel does not tell us that God is ready and willing to forgive them if and when a man believes; it does not offer a potential forgiveness of sins; it does not tell us that the actual forgiving on the part of God takes place not before the believing takes place on the part of man; but the Gospel tells us that when God in Christ reconciled the world unto Himself, He then did not impute the trespasses unto men, He then forgave all their sins to all of them. The act of forgiving is not held in abeyance, but it is finished, it is accomplished, the sins *are* forgiven to all men. Therefore we do not preach of and about forgiveness of sins, but we *preach forgiveness itself*; we offer to men a finished product, not a future possibility.

It is quite incomprehensible how any man can say that the Gospel indeed proclaims and offers forgiveness of sins to all the world and yet deny that the sins of all men are already forgiven. No prison warden may tell the convict that he is free unless the the governor has previously pardoned him. If this has not yet happened, the warden may perhaps talk of the willingness of the governor to pardon and about the possibility that he will do so, but he cannot "talk pardon," cannot tell the prisoner, "You are pardoned, you are free." Even so here. If the sins of men have not yet been actually and really forgiven, the forgiveness of sins is not yet ready to be offered as a free gift; then we cannot speak of forgiveness as of an accomplished fact, but only as of an eventuality contingent on something else besides the grace of God in Christ. This opinion finds support neither in the term "forgiveness of sins," which means that the sins are forgiven, nor in the teaching of the Bible, which definitely tells us that God did not impute sins to men, when He reconciled the world unto Himself. "Dass Gott den Suendern insgesamt die Suenden vergeben und die ganze Welt fuer gerecht erklaert hat" is a fact that is not affected by the faith or the unbelief of man, Rom. 3:3; 2 Tim. 2:12. As little as the acceptance or the rejection of the invitation had anything to do with the preparation of the great supper, Luke 14:16-24, so little has the belief or unbelief in the Gospel promise anything to do with the preparation of the things that are now ready for all.

If the real forgiving and justifying act of God does not take place until the moment a person comes to faith, then we shall have to change our entire mode of preaching. Then we cannot assure our people that their sins *are* forgiven, not even in absolution; all we could say is that God is very anxious to forgive their sins, but that they must first believe, and then He will surely do so. And if a person were in doubt as to whether he believes — and this is

sometimes the case — we should have no way of comforting him, since the fact of his believing would first have to be established before the act of forgiving could take place. If this theory is correct, it will also affect the merits of Christ's redemption; for then Christ did not actually justify us by His blood, Rom. 5:9, but only made our justification possible, pending our faith; then He achieved for us not an actual forgiveness but only a potential one, which becomes actual only if and when we believe. This theory will also change the object of our faith. For if God has not yet forgiven the sins of man, the penitent sinner can at first only believe that God *will* forgive; believing this, God does forgive; and thereafter the sinner believes that his sins *are* forgiven.

But thanks be to God, in His Gospel He does not merely hold out to us a possible, potential forgiveness of sins, which becomes a reality only in the event that a sinner believes, but here God proclaims an actual, factual, accomplished forgiveness. "All things are now ready." In the Gospel we learn, that God reconciled the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, 2 Cor. 5:19; that all that have sinned are freely justified by grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Rom. 3:23, 24; that the righteousness of Christ resulted for all men unto justification of life, Rom. 5:18. In the Gospel we have God's own official and authoritative declaration of what transpired in the court of heaven when He accepted the sacrifice of His Son for the reconciliation of the world. "Im Evangelium wird den Menschen nicht nur bekanntgegeben, dass, wenn sie glauben, sie gerecht und selig werden koennen, sondern dass fuer sie schon Gerechtigkeit vorhanden ist, dass Gott ueber sie schon ein guenstiges Urteil gefaellt hat, dass Gott in Christo die Menschheit mit Augen des Wohlgefallens ansieht, dass die Suender einen gnaedigen Gott haben." (Stoeckhardt, *Roemerbrief*, p. 46.)

If, therefore, we tell any man that God for Christ's sake has forgiven his sins, we are simply stating a fact that is revealed in the Bible by God Himself. This, however, does not mean that he also *has* forgiveness of sins. Full well we know that no man will and can accept this forgiveness in true faith if he does not repent of his sins. Yet his unbelief does not invalidate the fact that his sins are forgiven, Rom. 3:3. Whoever hedges in this gracious declaration, free promise, and outright offer of an accomplished forgiveness of sins with all manner of conditions that must be fulfilled before this forgiveness becomes an actuality, simply does not understand the quintessence of the Gospel. Even faith, of which we shall speak below, is not a condition in the sense that the forgiving act of God or the promise and offer of forgiveness is contingent upon it. God neither forgives sins, nor does He

offer forgiveness of sins, in view of faith, for both forgiveness itself and the offer of forgiveness in the Gospel are there before man believes. Faith is only the means, *medium apprehendens*, by which we accept what is offered as a ready gift.

**Personal justification by faith.**—In sketching the doctrine of Paul in an earlier paragraph we have shown that on the basis of objective or universal justification he teaches a subjective or personal justification by faith. We have also called attention to the fact that for the sake of clarity we must distinguish between the original act of God, by which He forgave all sins to all men and thus justified them, between the publication of this fact in the Gospel, and, finally, the acceptance of the Gospel offer by faith on the part of man. This last point must now engage our attention.

The fact that the Gospel reveals God's gracious judgment of justification and offers to all men, free and without charge, full forgiveness and perfect righteousness, does not mean that all men, or at least all that hear the Gospel, will also receive and have all these blessings. They are not forced on us, as the weather is, whether we like it or not. From Heb. 4:2 we learn that the Gospel does not profit some, not being mixed with faith in them that hear it. A present that was prepared at great cost and is sincerely and freely offered to a person will not benefit him if he refuses to accept it. Even so here. The great spiritual blessings which Christ prepared for all men by His holy life and His innocent suffering and death, and which are so freely offered to all in the Gospel, will not help those who reject them in unbelief, 2 Pet. 2:1; Luke 7:30. So objective or universal justification must not be construed to mean that *eo ipso* all men now also *enjoy* forgiveness, *are* personally justified, and will be saved.

God reveals and offers forgiveness, righteousness, and justification in the Gospel to the intent that men should hear it, trust in it, and accept it. For this reason Paul speaks not only of the reconciliation to God by Christ, not only of the Word of Reconciliation, but he adds, "We pray you in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled to God," 2 Cor. 5:20. This does not mean that man must still do something to perfect the reconciliation inaugurated by Christ, nor does it mean that we must do something that will induce God to offer and bestow its blessings upon us, but it means that we should accept this reconciliation and all it implies; that, repenting of our sins, we trust in God who justifies the ungodly; that we personally enter into this new relationship with our God. And this can be done in no other way than by faith.

Again, in Rom. 1:16, 17 Paul speaks of the Gospel and tells us, "Therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." This is not the personal righteousness of God, for that is not of

faith; but it is a righteousness that is intended for man. It is the righteousness Christ procured for us, 2 Cor. 5:21, a righteousness that avails before God, or as Luther puts it, "die Gerechtigkeit, die vor Gott gilt." It is revealed in the Gospel as a finished product; nothing need be or can be added thereto. It is a righteousness *εἰς πίστιν*, intended to be received through faith; and *ἐκ πίστεως*, it is ours as a result of faith. This plainly shows that the righteousness which Christ wrought for us, which God imputed to us, and which is revealed in the Gospel is to be taken by faith and possessed in faith. Therefore only he who believes the words of God's promise has what they say and express, namely, the forgiveness of sins and the righteousness of God.

Objective, or universal, justification therefore does not mean that thereby all its blessings are willy-nilly bestowed on, and imparted to, the individual personally and that all men will now be saved. When Lincoln issued his proclamation of emancipation, all Negroes were thereby automatically, as it were, set free, irrespective of whether they wanted to be free or not; they simply were free. But when God issued His proclamation of emancipation, that gracious judgment of universal justification, there was added the stipulation *ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν*; it was intended to be received by faith and to be held by faith. "Allerdings ist nun aber der Glaube ein notwendiges Annex dieser Gerechtigkeit, die im Evangelium offenbart wird, nur dass man das Verhaeltnis des Glaubens zur Gerechtigkeit richtig bestimmt. . . . So ist die Meinung des Apostels die, dass die Gerechtigkeit infolge des Glaubens (*ἐκ πίστεως*) uns zuteil, unser eigen wird. . . . Δικαιοσύνη εἰς πίστιν, das heisst, eine solche Gerechtigkeit, welche fuer den Glauben bestimmt und vorhanden, auf den Glauben berechnet ist." (Stoeckhardt, *Roemerbrief*, pp. 46, 47.) Whoever, therefore, does not believe that God has justified also him, does thereby not invalidate the judgment of God itself, Rom. 3:3; 2 Tim. 2:12, but he makes it of none effect as far as it concerns him, Luke 7:30. Not accepting and applying to himself that gracious judgment of God, he shall remain and die in his sins, John 8:24; 12: 36. In order, then, that God's promise of forgiveness and justification may profit the individual, it "must be mixed with faith in them that hear it," Heb. 4:2. Faith is the means by which the individual enters into personal possession and enjoyment of what God reveals and offers in the Gospel.

In this entire matter the function of faith is purely receptive; it does not supply any deficiencies; it does not add an additional motive; it merely takes and holds what God promises and gives. Art. III of the Formula of Concord (*Trigl.*, p. 919) says: "Concerning the righteousness of faith before God we believe, teach, and confess unanimously . . . that poor sinful man is justified

before God, that is, absolved and declared free and exempt from all sin and the sentence of well-deserved condemnation," etc., . . . "because of the sole merit, complete obedience, bitter suffering, death, and resurrection of our Lord Christ alone, whose obedience is reckoned to us for righteousness. These treasures are offered us by the Holy Ghost in the promise of the holy Gospel; faith alone is the only means by which we lay hold upon, accept, and apply, and appropriate them to ourselves."

**"Man is justified by faith."**—From what has been said above it must be clear what it means, and what it does not mean, to be justified by faith.

a) It does not mean that "faith is so good a work and so fair a virtue" (*Trigl.*, p. 919) that for this reason God declares a believer just. Faith is indeed an act of man; for while it is the Holy Spirit that creates faith in man through the Gospel, it is man that does the believing. Yet faith, considered as an act, or work, of man, has no justifying power whatever. Faith justifies not *per se*, but because of the object it has and holds.

b) It does not mean that faith is the organ through which means God declares a sinner just. The sentence by which God justifies the ungodly we have in the Gospel. By faith man merely trusts in this declaration, applies it to himself, as God wants him to do, and thus he personally becomes righteous.

c) What, then, does it mean that man is justified by faith? We have learned that by grace, for Christ's sake, God once for all forgave all sins to all men, 2 Cor. 5:19, and adjudged them all righteous, or justified them, Rom. 5:18. This act of God is finished and need not be repeated and is not repeated. This gracious judgment of God is published in the Gospel, that all men might know of it and believe in it. This Gospel, offering to lost sinners such wonderful things, has the power to create in the hearts of penitent sinners that faith by which they trust and rely upon what God here declares, and thereby they apply and appropriate to themselves what God here offers. Thus it is that by faith the individual enters into possession and enjoyment of those blessings that were prepared for him and are here offered to him, and in this way he personally becomes righteous, becomes a justified man.

The text Rom. 3:28 has the words δικαιωσθαι πιστει ἀνθρώπων. How shall we translate the word δικαιωσθαι? Liddell and Scott give the following definition for δικαιωσθαι: "to make just, pronounce and treat as righteous, to justify." The English version has "justified." The dative πιστει is the *dativus instrumentalis* or *modi*, and must be translated with "by means of." The first meaning of δικαιωσθαι, to make just, namely, by imputation, fits very well. In the passive it would mean to be made just or to become just. Our text



then would read: "We conclude that man becomes just by means of faith, without the deeds of the Law." Because by means of his faith he apprehends the merits of Christ, he now becomes a just man in the sight of God; or, because by means of faith he applies to himself the justifying sentence of God, as God wants him to do, he now becomes personally a justified man before God. Faith is neither the cause why God declares the sinner just, nor is it the means through which He pronounces him just, but being the *organon lepticon*, it takes and lays hold of those things because of which he is accounted just. Luther brings out this fine point in his translation. He does not say, "*dass der Mensch gerecht gesprochen oder erklart werde durch den Glauben*" — this might possibly be misunderstood — but he says, "*dass der Mensch gerecht werde durch den Glauben,*" certainly, by imputation.

In the Gospel God offers us sinners the riches of His grace, forgiveness of sins, the righteousness of Christ, justification unto life. All these things are now ready for me and for every other sinner. As they are offered to me in a promise, I can accept them in no other way than by faith. As I apprehend them by faith, they actually become my own, I have them, and thus I personally have become a just and righteous man in the sight of God. We speak of the justifying power of faith; yet in itself faith does not possess this power; the justifying power resides in the object to which our faith clings. It is not the act of taking, but the riches I take that make me rich. Therefore to be justified by faith means that by faith we trust in, and apply to ourselves, the gracious judgment of justification pronounced by God upon all men, and thus we personally become justified, and we remain under this gracious judgment as long as we continue in the faith.

**The relation between objective and subjective justification. —**

We have spoken of objective, or universal, justification and of subjective, or personal, justification. These are not Biblical terms, but they are used by dogmatists to distinguish between the twofold use made in the Bible of the word "justify." There is a group of texts in which the terms "justify" and "justification" are used of all men before they come to faith, as in Rom. 3:24; 4:25; 5:10, 18. And there is another group of texts where the word "justify" is used of those who come to faith, Rom. 3:26, 28; 5:1; Gal. 2:16; Acts 13:39; and others. Likewise we find that in Rom. 5:19 the obedience, or righteousness, of Christ is imputed to many (all), and in Rom. 4:11 we learn that it is imputed to the believers. And in 2 Cor. 5:19 we are told that the trespasses were not imputed, hence forgiven, to the world, and in Matt. 9:2 we find that Christ forgives sins to an individual, and in Mark 11:26 He tells us that God will not forgive sins to those who do not forgive their neighbor. One group

of texts speaks of a universal justification, forgiveness, and imputation of Christ's righteousness; the other group speaks of an individual, personal justification, forgiveness, and imputation of righteousness. How shall we understand this? If the only justifying and forgiving act of God takes place the moment a person comes to faith, then the texts which speak of a universal justification are meaningless, and if personal justification is a repetition of objective justification, then the latter was superfluous and ineffective. But if the only forgiving and justifying act took place in the court of God before any man believed, and if this act covers all men, the world, what does it then mean that God forgives sins to the believer, imputes to him righteousness and justifies him which believeth in Christ, Rom. 3:26? In short, what is the relation between universal and personal justification?

The all-embracing justifying act of God, by which He forgave all sins to all men, accounted them righteous, and justified them *intuitu Christi*, took place, humanly speaking, the moment He accepted the redemptive work of His Son for the reconciliation of the world, 2 Cor. 5:19; Rom. 3:24; 4:25; 5:10, 18. It was then that in the court of heaven He freely by grace for Christ's sake absolved all sinners and declared them just. And this act of God need not be repeated and is not repeated, even as the redemption by Christ, on which it is based, is never repeated.

What happens in the case of the believer, who trusts in, and apprehends, this gracious judgment of God, is that as he applies this justification to himself, God also applies it to him and confirms it upon him. With the believer the objective justification becomes effective, God declares him a recipient of the forgiveness offered to all.

**By which of these, universal or personal justification, are the benefits of justification bestowed on man?**—It has been said if God in Christ has forgiven all sins and declared all men just, what further need is there of faith? Does universal justification not give, bestow, and impart to all men forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and eternal life? From what has been said above it is clear that our answer is definitely, No. Objective justification has taken place in the mind and heart of God; in His own court He has adjudged all men just and righteous, Rom. 5:18, 19. This fact God revealed to us in the Gospel for the purpose that we should accept it in faith, Rom. 1:17. He who fails or refuses to do this, who does not avail himself of what God has done for him and what God offers to him, will certainly not be benefited, Heb. 4:2. To have and hold and enjoy them, it is necessary that the individual accept them in faith.

It is by what we call personal justification that all the blessings

settled upon us in objective justification are applied, conferred, bestowed, and imparted to us. To have and possess a gift that is prepared and intended for me, I must take it. And since these blessings are offered to us in an unconditional promise, there is positively no other means by which we can take them than faith. Thus it is by faith, and by faith alone, that man obtains the forgiveness of his sins, puts on the garment of Christ's righteousness, and becomes personally justified before God. And it will never happen that God will tell a believer that he appropriated something to himself that was not intended for him. By faith man possesses himself of what God wants him to have. It is in this way that faith is reckoned for righteousness, Rom. 4:5; in this way God is the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, Rom. 3:26; in this way He would justify the heathen, Gal. 3:8; in this way righteousness is imputed to the believers, Rom. 4:11, and forgiveness of sins is imparted to them, Matt. 9:2. Hence objective justification without subjective justification profits no man; yet subjective justification without objective justification is impossible.

**The certainty of forgiveness of sins and of justification by faith.**—The personal certainty that by faith we have the forgiveness of our sins and are justified before God is based on the objective fact that in Christ God has forgiven all sins and justified the ungodly. No one can personally be sure that by faith he has obtained forgiveness and is accounted righteous, as long as the least doubt attaches to this fact. Our sins must have been forgiven before we can be sure that they are forgiven; God must have declared us just before we can by faith be sure of this fact. The fact, as revealed in the Gospel, that God forgave all sins and declared all the ungodly just is the foundation on which the certainty of faith rests.

In this connection we would call attention to the Fifth Petition, "Forgive us our trespasses." Does this mean that our sins were unforgiven before, and are only now forgiven by God in answer to our prayer? From 2 Cor. 5:19 we learn that when God in Christ reconciled the world unto Himself, He did not impute their trespasses unto them; that means that then already God forgave the sins to all men. What, then, can this petition mean? Does it mean that God should once more forgive our sins? The very fact that God commands us so to pray makes this petition a promise and assurance of forgiveness on His part. For He certainly would not tell us to pray for forgiveness if this forgiveness were not yet ready for us. He who sincerely prays this petition thereby shows that he realizes his need of forgiveness, and is certain that he shall get it.

But what does it mean when Christ says, "When ye stand pray-

ing, forgive if ye have ought against any, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses," Mark 11: 25, 26. Does this mean that the great act by which God forgives sins to men has not yet taken place, but will take place only when and if we forgive our neighbor? that the forgiving act of God would depend upon the forgiving act of man? Such interpretation would be contrary to what God tells us 2 Cor. 5: 19 and Rom. 5: 18, 19. If God did not impute sins to the world, then He forgave sins to all men, including the person that will not forgive his neighbor. What Christ means to say is that he who is unforgiving in his heart cannot and shall not *have* the forgiveness, which is indeed ready also for him. For he who does not forgive his brother has no faith, and it is by faith alone that we can take and hold the forgiveness God offers to us in the Gospel. Whatever kills faith in the heart deprives us of all we held by faith. We have forgiveness and justification as long as we continue in the faith; faith lost, forgiveness, righteousness, and salvation is lost. This text therefore does not contradict 2 Cor. 5: 19, for as little as the impenitence of man can nullify the redemption by Christ, can it nullify the sentence of God's justification and forgiveness. What it does do is this, that as long as a person remains impenitent, it makes the gracious will and sentence of God noneffective and inoperative as far as it concerns this particular person.

Forgiveness of sins is the result and product of the forgiving act of God. The act of forgiving took place when God accepted the sacrifice of His Son for the reconciliation of the world; this act is never repeated. But the forgiveness of sins is continually being offered to us in the Gospel to be accepted by faith. The Gospel does not promise forgiveness to us as a future blessing we may hope for, as we hope for eternal life, but it is offered as an accomplished fact. The believer does not say, I hope that God will forgive my sins to me; but, trusting in the Word of God, he says, I know that God has forgiven me all my sins and "that He richly and daily forgives all sins to me and all believers." And in this he is absolutely right. Because God has forgiven and justified me, therefore I am by faith sure that I am, and am being, forgiven and justified. Thus it is that objective justification by grace in Christ makes subjective justification by faith sure and certain to me.

We like to think of objective justification as the bank of God, in which is deposited for all men an inexhaustible treasure of grace and forgiveness. This treasure was prepared and earned by Christ and is sufficient for all the needs of all men. God does not forgive my sins only when I come to this bank, but the treasure is there, it is ready and waiting for me. This bank of God is open at all hours,

day and night, and as often as I penitently turn to God in faith to draw on this treasure for my daily needs, He will not refuse me, John 6:37; He will never tell me, No more funds for you, you are overdrawing your account. For He tells me, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," Is. 1:18. This bank never fails; it is always solvent, no matter how many sinners come and how large the amounts they draw; for "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," Rom. 5:20, and with the Lord there is "plenteous redemption," Ps. 130:7. If a person, therefore, does not get what is deposited for him, it is entirely his own fault; he has no faith whereby he can draw on this heavenly treasure. Our chief concern therefore is not what God will do with our sins, for that has been settled long ago, Christ atoned for them and God forgave them; but our concern must be, How shall we *obtain and possess ourselves of this forgiveness*, how may we personally become righteous? And there is but one answer: "Believe the Gospel," Mark 1:15; "Believe in Jesus Christ," Acts 16:31; "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves," 2 Cor. 13:5.

The faith by which the individual accepts the forgiveness of his sins and applies to himself the justifying sentence of God is created in the heart by God Himself through the Gospel, John 17:20. Yet a discussion of this point would lead us into the doctrine of conversion, which lies beyond the scope of this essay. Nevertheless, we are to teach this Gospel for the purpose that men might thereby come to faith, and no one can do this effectively if he does not understand the principal doctrine of the Gospel, the doctrine of justification. For this doctrine is the very heart of the Gospel. Without it the Bible could not make us wise unto salvation; without it the life and death of Christ would have no meaning, and our faith would be vain; without it our sanctification of life would lack the proper motivation, and no penitent sinner could have the sure hope of life eternal. Let us therefore guard this doctrine as the apple of our eye, and may God preserve it in our midst pure and undefiled.

River Forest, Ill.

E. W. A. KOEHLER

---



## The Lord's Prayer, the Pastor's Prayer

### Opening Words

Since the address *Father* is found in both Gospel records (Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:2), we begin our meditation at the word *Father*.

On that exceeding high mountain, Jesus repulsed Satan by means of the weapon: "Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." When He teaches His disciples to worship and to pray, He consistently leads them to the one true God. Therefore we are sure that the one true God is He whom Jesus wants us to address. We are to call Him our Father. Therefore we are further assured that the one true God is our Father and that our Father is the one true God.

God and the Father are the identical Person. In the Epistles the two terms are joined frequently with reference to the First Person of the Trinity, except in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the combination does not seem to appear at all. Note the forms of the combination when it pertains to the relation between God and His children: God, the Father (Phil. 2:11; 1 Pet. 1:2; etc.); God, our Father (2 Thess. 1:1, 2; Phil. 1:2; etc.); God and the Father (Col. 3:17; Eph. 5:20); our God and Father (Eph. 4:6); God and our Father (Gal. 1:4; etc.). My readers will graciously permit an interruption to add also the combinations of the terms *God and Father* when they pertain to the relation between the Father and the Son: God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 11:31); the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:3); God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Col. 1:3); God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 15:6; 2 Cor. 1:3). But the relation of the Father and the Son and the trinitarian relation, while it certainly stands as the basis of the Lord's Prayer and is essential to all our prayers, does not enter at this moment of our study. The issue at hand is that "to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him" (1 Cor. 8:6), and that we address in the Lord's Prayer the one true God, "who to us in love hath the right of children given."

When we truly realize whom Jesus wants us to address as Father, we will appreciate the rich meaning and full significance of the combinations of terms mentioned above, as they recur with or without the article, with or without the pronoun, in idiomatic Greek. In his book *The Minister and His Greek New Testament*, A. T. Robertson cites on page 62 the "sound and scientific principle laid down by Granville Sharp": "When the copulative *καί* connects two nouns of the same case, if the article *ὁ*, or any of its

cases, precedes the first of the said nouns or participles and is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always relates to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle: *i. e.*, it denotes a farther description of the first named person." On page 63 Robertson mentions as a common idiom *the God and Father* and adds a number of references. The application of Sharp's rule to the word *Father* joined to God fills our hearts with joy, for there is nothing else to do than to apply the ascription *Father* to the one and only true and eternal God.

"No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." Through Jesus the Father reveals Himself to babes (Matt. 11:25-27). God grant that all of us may ever long to be as wise and prudent in secular and spiritual knowledge as Paul and Luther and as strong and courageous as Abraham and Gideon, and yet remain pious babes to whom the Son reveals the Father.

No one of us wants to continue in the sacred office, no, not for one hour, unless he can tell his congregation: God is your Father. Our ministry is cruelty to body and soul if we cannot truthfully proclaim to our flock: God is your Father. We pastors are found false witnesses of God, and our preaching is hypocrisy and vain except for the message of Christ: God is your Father. Christ wants us to address God as our Father.

This name of God leads us into the heart of God. A better understanding of its significance means a greater knowledge of God and a wider comprehension of our prayer; it means increased joy and affectionate devotion. There is no other ascription so endearing, delightful, and powerful. Even the term God can attract us only when associated with the name Father. For what else is God to us than the unapproachable Being unless the fact of His fatherhood is joined to Him? The fatherhood of God does not signify His lofty majesty and exalted sovereignty over the created universe. It signifies the intimate relation and fond fellowship which God in His divine love bestows upon and grants to His own. With this name is associated fatherly love, solicitous care, ample provision, reliable protection, compassionate patience, nurture and admonition, wise counsel and correction, friendship, guidance. Our Father is glorious. He is perfect in all His attributes. His works are marvelous. His name is holy; His kingdom has no end; His will is supreme in righteousness and grace. He is the Ruler of the universe, of all nations. His arms enfold the orphans; His eye protects the sparrow. His thoughts toward us are thoughts of peace and forgiveness. Of His fullness have we received His Son, life, righteousness. He is our unfailing Friend and wise Counselor. His Word is the truth, His Gospel the

power of salvation and true comfort. He is the almighty Deliverer. His testament bequeaths to us eternal glory in heaven. His house and home is filled with light, joy, music, song, riches, beauty. According to the Petitions He is the holy, royal, benevolent, giving, forgiving, protecting, saving Father.

God's fatherhood is not self-evident. Many think that it is, and they brazenly address God as Father in the words of the Lord's Prayer. How do they "get that way?" They are "that way" by nature. Satan has deceived some to despair when the thought of God strikes them. These do not dare to approach God as Father, nor can they until we have brought to them the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Or the sinner uses the concept of fatherhood as applied to God for a hope of escape from God's wrath and for a balm to his biting conscience. Fear, not love; despair, not devotion; terror, not trust, drive him to blaspheme the Most High by calling Him Father. Satan has deceived others to the arrogance and boldness to present themselves to the Father in their own righteousness. Their prayer is vain repetition, and it must offend God. It infuriates us, His children, when we hear the cursed (Matt. 25:41) belch forth in foul unbelief the dear Name to which we have exclusive right and when they invite God's children to pray "Our Father" with them, the cursed.

It is to be regretted that some theologians without proper explanation make the statement that God is the Father of all mankind and then allow the inevitable conclusion of a universal brotherhood of man. This concession mars the glory of the Father by dragging down His Fatherhood to embrace the children of the devil before their conversion, and it dims the bright luster of God's family and house by admitting Satan's brood. It yields a point which "the brethren according to the flesh" exploit until the day of doom. Often the injury done is not intentional; yet it requires the Father's forgiveness. The concession is unscriptural.

In pastoral and polemical situations it is easier to explain the truth that God is the Father only of the believers, and that therefore only the true believers have the privilege of the Lord's Prayer, than to uphold the assumption of the universal fatherhood of God; for it is always easier to remain within the Scriptures than to venture beside or beyond them. However, this is no argument unless we prove that according to the Scriptures the fatherhood of God extends only to the true Christians.

We reject, first of all, every attempt to build a doctrine on uncertain inferences. From His having created all men, people infer that God is the Father of all men. Is that tenable? Nowhere in the Bible is the supposed relation of this purported universal fatherhood of God resting in the relation between Creator and

creature advanced as a basis for the real and actual fatherhood of God, nor is it ever adduced as a cause of, or as being of consequence to, our salvation. Nor can it be held that the terms *Creator* and *Father* are absolutely identical in meaning. If what I have said is true, as I believe it is, great care must be employed by us in speaking of the fatherhood of God. This is especially true in these days of Modernism with its slogan of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

There is a text, I admit, which some expositors have cited to prove that there is Scripture warrant for the view that God's having created all men means that He is the Father of all men. This passage is Acts 17:26-29.

Let me introduce here Dr. Tseter (cf. ζητέω) and Dr. Nomitzer (cf. νομίζω). The former is an honest seeker, the latter a profound thinker. My readers have heard of them before. Although neither is a child of God by faith in Jesus, both yield to the compelling evidences observed by the natural knowledge of God. They admit that in God they live and move and are. They express their dependence on Him by attacking their day's work with sincere devotional prayer: with the convenient "Our Father who art in heaven." Just the other day they heard a Lutheran minister say in a funeral address to a mixed audience, in effect, that the devil is the father of most men, that God is the Father of the few, and that only those few have a right to God's throne and to the Lord's Prayer. This is nonsense, of course. So they thought. And they went home with the intention of peppering that parson with points of Scripture against him. For does not the Bible say somewhere that God is the Father of all because He created all? Therefore the Lord's Prayer must be the common property and privilege of all men!

Diligent search leads them to Mal. 2:10. There the scholars find mention made of a fatherhood of God and also a brotherhood. However, as scholars they note that verse 9 refers to the prodigal Jews, who are distinguished from all the people, and this distinction occurs again in the last words of verse 10. They see that the brotherhood is limited to the Jews, and they are faced by the inevitable conclusion that therefore the fatherhood naturally must be limited to the Jews. Nevertheless, is not this one specific fatherhood founded on the creatorship of God? First the learned doctors observed the progression of thought in Hebrew poetry; but then they recognized in verse 10 two unrelated arguments, actually three arguments, for the return of prodigal Judah: a *maxima ad minima*, namely, first, the revealed knowledge of God, then, the natural knowledge of God, and lastly, the exclusive brotherhood of the Jews as the people of God. They agreed that

the passage does not teach a universal fatherhood of God based on, and in the sense of, His universal creatorship. For a moment silence marked their disappointment. Then Dr. Tseter found a reference to Job 31:15; but he noticed immediately that neither text nor context indicates a universal fatherhood.

Again Dr. Tseter turned the sacred pages, now to Is. 64:8, 9; but Dr. Nomitzer argued that the entire chapter refers only to the believers in the Messiah and that the same considerations apply here as with the Malachi passage. Their eyes happened to fall on Is. 63:16 of the preceding page, and they agreed that here, too, not a trace of a universal fatherhood, or a fatherhood by reason of God's creatorship, can be found. Dr. Tseter did more searching. His running to and fro led him to Ps. 100:3. His opinion was that its first part evidently taught a creation and its second part an ingathering of the Lord's sheep. Dr. Nomitzer suggested that the translation may be faulty and lacking in force and correctness. Their zeal provoked them to call by telephone Rabbi Goldgreifer. He accommodated them and translated: Know ye that Jehovah, He is God; He made us, and unto Him are we His people and the sheep of His pasture. The rabbi, otherwise most liberal, denied that any inference is logical and strong enough to deduce from the text a universal fatherhood. Their thoughts turned to the pastor's funeral address.

The next morning Dr. Tseter visited the university library. He knew that the Lutherans had placed a section there. He found the book called the *Concordia Triglotta*. Perhaps this would help him solve the problem one way or the other. It did, the one way. To his amazement he found no reference there to Mal. 2:10 nor to a universal fatherhood of God. As he closed the book, he saw Dr. Nomitzer, deeply engrossed in a volume. His first remark to him was the question: Did you pray "Our Father" this morning? Nomitzer had not prayed it. He was studying Eph. 3:15, and he admitted to his friend that the fatherhood taught here by inference can relate only to the believers in Christ. But he smiled triumphantly when he placed his finger on Acts 17:24-29. Both studied this passage avidly, also with a smacking of Greek, and having stressed *γένος*, that evening they prayed "Our Father."

But the learned doctors were not satisfied. They were uneasy and troubled in their mind. Especially Nomitzer, the thinker, was haunted by the word *offspring*. Anyway, the diminutive parson had done damage by wounding feelings and debasing the offspring by his musty oration. Gravely they went to reprimand him.

They said: We are not Christians, but we are the offspring of God. We are His stock and race. We belong to His family and nation. The poet Aratus says that; and the Apostle Paul admits



it and uses it as a basis and premise of his argumentation. Therefore we are God's children. Therefore He is our Father. Therefore we pray "Our Father." He performs upon us the functions of a father: He gives to us life, breath, and all things, and in Him we live, and move, and exist. But you say that the devil is our father, and you deny our right to pray "Our Father." We resent that. We represent, by self-appointment, all religions, sects, cults, lodges. For we all believe in one God, the Father of all, and we all pray "Our Father."

The polished pastor expressed his pleasure at their coming, and he said: Well, gentlemen, you refer to two Bible passages, to Acts 17 and John 8:44. Now do you wish to abide by these two only, or are you inclined to look at other passages also, such as: "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus"; or: "As many as received Jesus, to them gave He power to become the sons of God"?

They said: Paul's statement is enough. From it we have established that God is our Father by reason of the fact that He is our Creator. We are His offspring. He is our Preserver, who performs the functions of a father upon us. This one passage is satisfactory.

The pastor said: Is it? To reason from act to relation seems to me unscholarly as well as humiliating to us, the offspring. The fact that God numbers the very hairs of your head does not yet establish kinship. Are you willing to drop the proposition that God is our Father by reason of His creatorship and preservation? For He has created also the sparrow; and He performs the functions of a father also upon the flitting butterfly and on the agile squirrels and the *koulans*, the wild asses of Asia. You would not care to call us their brothers!

Dr. Nomitzer, the thinker, said: Since they are of a different blood, we are not their brothers. The one blood makes all men brothers.

The pastor said: the one blood does not bring them into a relation to God. Man is not of God's blood or nature to claim His Fatherhood. But if you base that claim on the creation, you will have to admit that God is the Father of the dumb creature as well as He is the Father of *Homo sapiens*. Do you not see that you are actually inserting the concept of the fatherhood? Paul does not refer to it. He speaks of God as God, as the Creator, the Lord, the Preserver, the Governor; and he speaks of us as *homines ignorantes*, as subjects and dependents.

Dr. Nomitzer was quick to reply: As offspring.

But the pastor said: Yes, as offspring, and nothing more. The term offspring would be an argument in your favor except for

the fact that the entire context compels you to understand the term as designating merely the relation of the creature to the Creator, not paternal and filial kinship. That the term *offspring* indicates merely a relation which excludes kinship is clear from Paul's utterances regarding the worship of God, the ignorance of God's offspring, the divine concern in the spiritual condition of the offspring, and his introduction of the Creator and Preserver, mind you, as the righteous Judge. The thought of kinship did not enter the mind of Paul. By his reference to man's ignorance he proves the insufficiency of the natural knowledge of God. Where this ends, Paul begins to proclaim the revealed knowledge of God: the reason for, and the manner of, worshiping Him, the need of seeking Him, of feeling after Him, of finding Him, so that the ignorant offspring which as yet sustains only the relation of creature to the Creator may enter into the kinship of children to the Father. Dear friends, I beseech you to do what Paul preaches, that is, to believe in Jesus. Only then can you pray "Our Father."

Dr. Nomitzer objected: Paul does not say that he uses the word *offspring* in a different sense from that of the poets and the Greeks.

The pastor replied: Neither did the poets and the Greeks designate filial kinship to God by that word.

Dr. Tseter, the searcher, said: We admit that the word *offspring* is our only strength and argument. So we searched for its meaning, and we found that it is used to denote family relations, kinship, for instance, at. . . .

With a smile the pastor interrupted: Doctor, you said before that this one passage is sufficient for you. I respected your wish. The word *offspring* is used only twice in the New Testament to denote a person's relation to God. The Greeks applied it to any species or class of things—goods, produce, materials, crops, heredity, parentage.

Dr. Nomitzer suggested: Parenthood! And I still say "Our Father."

The pastor said: The expositor must observe the general usage of a word until he is compelled to adopt a special usage. Paul determines the use of the word at this place. He had the true knowledge of God. The analogy of faith which Paul knew would not permit the use of the word *offspring* in the sense of, or as a synonym for, children. Note that he, as they, avoids the specific and endearing terms *Father* and *children*. In your entire passage neither term appears. Granted, however, that you trace the origin of the word *offspring*, as implying kinship, to mythological anthropomorphism, you will have found another reason why Paul could not stoop to kinship in a certain sense. Since he yields

to the use of the word *offspring* without further definition and explanation, it is clear that the Greeks did not connect with it the concept of kinship. He admits his blood relation, not kinship, to the ignorant and unbelieving Greeks, which is the universal brotherhood according to the blood, but not kinship with God nor a universal fatherhood of God. The fatherhood of God is revealed only in the inspired Word, and in one sense only, and the adoption of sons in one sense only, and this one and only sense extends the fatherhood of God to those only who believe in the God-Man Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, not to all whom you have chosen to represent and who claim the right of children on the fact of creation. The fatherhood of God is exclusive; it embraces the believers only.

Dr. Tseter remarked: You have narrowed it down to a very narrow doctrine. Is that what the Lutheran Church teaches?

The pastor answered: Yes. We agreed to refrain from the reference to other passages of Scripture, and therefore I am not introducing their support. But our confessional writings, presented in the *Concordia Triglotta*, are based upon, and drawn from, and state, the Word of God. There the words Almighty and Maker refer to the Creator and His creation, but the word *Father* to God's spiritual kinship to the believers. This distinction is observed also in the exposition of Luther's Small Catechism, used as a handbook in our schools and other classes. We teach all, and you, that God has given Himself to be our Father in Christ Jesus, that He regenerates us to become His children. This doctrine is broad and glorious and true. Do you intelligent men accept the universal doctrine that children of the devil have God as their Father?

Dr. Nomitzer replied: The phrase *children of the devil* is only a figure of speech. It does not apply to us.

The pastor said: Then the phrase *fatherhood of God* is only a figure of speech and does not apply to you. When Jesus speaks of the fatherhood of God and of the fatherhood of the devil, He uses very simple, plain, and direct speech. If you will study with me also John 8, you will yield to the proper understanding of the word *offspring* in Acts 17. Your natural knowledge of God would be enlarged, and you would enter with me upon the sphere of the revealed knowledge which saves the offspring from the judgment of which Paul speaks to the Greeks and Christ to the Jews. You would come to the true faith and receive the bliss and blessing enjoyed by the exclusive family of God. Then you could pray "Our Father."

Dr. Nomitzer yielded: I admit that I condemned your argument as hairsplitting, petty wrangling. But I am impressed. It

splits humanity; it gives everything to the one part and leaves nothing to the other.

The pastor said: It leaves to you the encouragement to seek the Lord, to feel after Him, and to find Him.

And here this interview ended.

Have we lingered too long at the one word *Father*? With reference to the Apostles' Creed Luther says (Trigl., p. 681): "For the learned and those who are somewhat advanced in Scriptural knowledge, these three articles may well be expanded and divided into as many parts as there are words." Since my readers are learned men, they will not object to further expansion on the ascription *Our Father*. For now we observe that, while the term *Father* is applied to God and His relation to us more than 250 times in the New Testament, its infrequency in the Old Testament bewilders us. Was it awe and veneration or timidity and dread or estrangement which sealed the lips of the faithful of old from uttering the word *Our Father*? There is no record to tell us that Adam, Abraham, Job, or others before Moses, addressed God as Father. Once, only once, does Moses mention directly the relation of God as Father to Israel (Deut. 32:6), and before that only by inference (Ex. 4:22; Num. 11:11 f.). In Ps. 89:26 the Messiah calls God His Father. In Ps. 103:13 we have only a comparison. In Ps. 68:5 God is called the Father of the fatherless. Isaiah calls the Messiah the everlasting Father (9:6), and when he prays: "Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer," he addresses the Messiah. Also in Is. 64:8 the Prophet sees the Father in the Messiah. We recall the prayer of Philip: "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus answered: Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou, then, Show us the Father?"

Why all the gloomy dimness over the fatherhood of God until finally Jesus encourages us to say "Our Father"? Do we find here an argument in favor of the assumed progressiveness of the Christian religion? No. The Christian religion is not subject to progressiveness, *Fortbildung*. The fatherhood of God always existed. Where do we find its first revelation? In Paradise (Gen. 3:15). By implication? No, by inclusion; for the Gospel of Jesus Christ envelops the fatherhood of God. It is the means by which the Father reveals Himself as Father, the means by which He begets us as His children, the means by which He keeps His children and heirs. Whenever this Gospel is proclaimed, God begets children and gives Himself to them as their Father in Christ. But whoever is still subject to the Law does not know God as the Father, only as the Creator and Judge, since God is Father only in

the specific sense of the Gospel. The fatherhood of God is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Because the believers in the Old Testament had the Gospel of the Messiah, they moved in the light of the fatherhood of God. Neither can we allow a progression in the revelation of God's fatherhood; for the fatherhood of God is absolute. To the seeming problem we read the solution in Gal. 4:1-7. It is beautiful. It teaches us that there is no divine Father unless He is *Abba*, Father, — and in our prayer, "Our Father." It teaches us that as the Law recedes to give place to the Gospel, the fatherhood of God appears in all its overwhelming splendor and comfort. Christ was sent to glorify the Father, to reveal the Father, to lead to the Father, to keep us with the Father. Does He accomplish all this? Yes, by His word and by His work. In John 14 He reveals the trinitarian relation and the relation of God as Father to the believers. Thereafter the Holy Spirit came into our hearts, crying, "Abba, Father." We note that the difference between the two covenants of God is not to be denied; but the revelation of the fatherhood of God is as absolute as the Gospel of Christ both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament is absolute. The Gospel promises had to be fulfilled before the fatherhood of God could be fully appreciated by the children.

It requires equal strength of faith to say *our* Father as to say *our Father*. The word *our* emphasizes our relation to God, already expressed by the word *Father*, in that it denotes the personal possession of that relation, the filial application of the fatherhood, the enjoyment of the happy state of sonship. The Father belongs to us because He has given Himself to us. Luther makes the correct conclusion that God invites us to believe that we are His true children. We can always reverse this reasoning from the state of sonship to the fatherhood of God according to the Gospel: God is our Father, therefore we are His children; we are God's children because (not therefore) He is our Father.

By fact of the common human blood the just Lot called the sinners of Sodom brethren. God calls our fellow men our brethren (Gen. 9:5). This is the universal brotherhood of men. But by the bond of faith the true believers form a spiritual and very real brotherhood with Jesus. Jesus acknowledges the believers His brethren (John 20:17). He calls those His brethren who do the will of His Father (Matt. 12:50). This is the exclusive spiritual brotherhood with Christ by His blood. Have you ever noticed the clear distinction which Jesus observes in John 20:17? "I am not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren, and say unto them: 'I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'" When Jesus speaks of the relation between Himself and the Father, He never includes the brethren in that rela-



tion; when He speaks of the relation between the believers and the Father, He never includes Himself, but always all the believers, in the sonship by using the plural pronoun. The trinitarian relation demands the distinction. Jesus does not join with us in the prayer "Our Father." The reasons are obvious.

By using the plural pronoun *our*, Jesus wants us to acknowledge the spiritual brotherhood described in Ephesians 4 and to recognize those as our brethren whom He accepts as His brethren. Each successive pronoun in the Lord's Prayer referring to the petitioners is in the plural number. Those who pray as God's children should pray as brethren. But they must be true brethren. "All ye are brethren." "One is your Father." (Matt. 23:8, 9.)

We Christians did not choose our brethren. The Father made the choice. Is not His choice the best? We are glad. The sinners and publicans with whom Jesus sat at table are our brethren, and with them we pray "Our Father." The choice of God pleases us with reference to our own persons, for by His choice we are privileged to be brethren to the children of God. Until the congregation expels him from the brotherhood according to God's regulations, the offending brother is to be considered a brother still. If we are personally convinced, on account of his impenitence, that we can no longer pray "Our Father" with him, we are to tell the congregation.

The plural pronoun *our* prepares the pastor for the act of intercession for the brethren. The direct intercession begins with the Fourth Petition; in the first three it is rendered by implication. Since the ascription *Father* extends to the pastor the comfort of being the next of kin to God and since the pronoun *our* reminds him of the love and respect due to the brother, these two words qualify him, by framing his mind to the proper attitude, to comfort, exhort, admonish the brethren and sisters under his spiritual care. However, not by his act of praying, but by virtue of the word of God which he is privileged to pray, that state of mind is effected in him. The pastor will also remember that his brethren and sisters, God's children, include their pastor in their intercession when they pray with him "Our Father." Whatever the pastor finds to be their need, usually is his need, too; and none of his charges is less dependent on the Father than he.

Let us define such joint prayer as co-operative prayer prompted by co-operative faith. We have an example recorded in Matt. 9:2-7 and Mark 2:3-12, where we emphasize in the Matthew record verse 2, in the Mark record verse 5. It is clear that the act of carrying the sick man to Christ was the visible action of a joint desire, of a co-operating prayer active in joint effort. Each man had his task at his respective corner of the bed which he had to

hold and control by means of the cord attached. Jesus acknowledged their prayer, because He saw the source of it: their faith. *Faith* is in the singular, for there is only one faith acceptable to God. *Their* is the plural pronoun. The plural modifies the singular. In this instance therefore Jesus saw the personal faith of each co-operating friend, the *fides qua creditur*, the confidence and trust in the heart of each man. Therefore faith remains in the singular. But the same faith was held by the five friends; hence the pronoun is in the plural. Faith, then, is the *fides qua creditur*, while *their* refers to the *fides quae creditur*, that is, they all believed personally, each for himself, but each believed what the others believed. Co-operative faith is the confidence of the individual believer working together with the confidence of the other believers, in common interest, toward the attainment of the Father's blessings, and expressed by the same desire and visible in united effort. It is just this which Jesus proposes with the promise of great blessings, Matt. 18:19, without going to the trouble of analyzing each case.

The amount of energy contributed — whether it be physical, financial, intellectual — need not be in equal portions or measure for co-operation so long as each co-operates according to ability. Thus faith need not be in equal measure to be able to co-operate in prayer. The weak can pray with the strong, the strong should pray with the weak. The diversity of gifts is not a disturbing but promoting factor in co-operative prayer. Disturbing factors proceed out of the sinful heart. Imagine ambitiousness, intolerance, jealousy, unionism, one at each of the four corners of the sick man's bed! Do they not spill the patient before they get to the Physician? We must have dependable, sure-footed, sober, united doctors and interns to bear the patient safely. The precious term *Our Father* demands, and urges toward, the unity of the faith, and so operates toward greater unification, not as a means of grace when it is being prayed, but as a divine doctrine which we believe.

The true children of God regard this term *Our Father* also as a confession. We have the duty to avoid those who do not continue in this word of Christ and who express by use of these sacred words their "magnanimous" unionism with the "Christless father-ites." This they call co-operation. We have not the choice of our brethren, and we should co-operate in prayer without respect of persons, yet always *intuitu fidei*, for we have the duty of testifying and confessing. Therefore we want confessors, not confessionalists.

Our Father is in the heavens. Luke omits the epithet *who is in the heavens* and thus emphasizes the kinship most impressively. In the Matthew record this divine name is most appropriate for promoting confidence and trust; for the agnomen conforms to the

preceding statement of Christ: "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him." Like the phrase itself, so its very frequency throughout Scripture proclaims the glory of God. Sometimes it appears as Law and makes the sinner tremble, as in Psalm 2: "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh." Sometimes it appears as the Gospel, as in the Lord's Prayer.

The Old Testament speaks of heaven in the plural number. Only twice have we found the singular, which is obsolete, namely in Deut. 10:14 and 1 Kings 8:27: "the heavens and heaven of heavens." In the New Testament the plural is not merely adopted from the Old. As in the Hebrew, so in the Greek, the plurals serve to describe the greatness and majesty of our Father. He is not a territorial god, of limited sovereignty, bound to a specific locality. He fills all things, the cosmos, and is greater than the cosmos; He is infinite. The Father, whom the heavens and heaven of heavens cannot contain, yet maintains a dwelling place (1 Kings 8:49), which is the height of His sanctuary (Ps. 102:19). It is His official seat of government. It is where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. It is the throne of power and the throne of grace. Jesus invites our soul to enter through infinite regions and the vast expanse of the invisible "into the holiest," into heaven itself, εἰς αὐτὸν τὸν οὐρανόν.

As we pray to the Father, we are admitted into His place of habitation, into the presence of the Most High, to His very heart of mercy. We cannot behold the majesty of His glory. Nor can we always understand His government or measure His infinite grace in Christ. We pastors often sigh to know the secret of His ways, to understand His guidance and the course which He leads us and our fold. His ways are past finding out. Nor is a full knowledge of His government necessary. For we know that He knows us, sees us, hears us, loves us, for Jesus' sake. Let His grace be sufficient for us. We know that He looks from the heavens and beholds all the sons of men from the first Adam to the last. We know that the refreshing showers of His grace have their source in His heart. And we know that we shall see Him as He is, when we have passed, all-glorious, over the threshold of our home in the heavens. We never have an excuse for gloom, melancholy, dismay, for we remember and believe that our Father is in the heavens.

After consideration and study of each word of this Introduction to the petitions, Luther arrived at this explanation and application, which is still the best: "God would by these words tenderly invite us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that we may with all boldness and confidence ask Him as dear children ask their dear father."

Los Angeles, Calif.

G. H. SMUKAL

## Forgiveness in the LXX

The Messianic 130th Psalm sings in its key verse: "There is forgiveness with Thee." The Hebrew *salach* (forgiveness, to forgive) is generally rendered in the Septuagint by ἵλασμός, ἱλάσκομαι. Its primary significance is to shelter, to cover. The classics transposed its meaning to the religious procedure of the conciliation of the gods; with them ἱλάσκομαι denotes obtaining the favor of the gods. Homer always uses it so.

Our Latin-English verb *cover* is a direct lineal descendant of the Hebrew *kaphar*, the noun in the LXX being ἵλασμός, and translated "propitiation," "atone," "atonement." The verb ἐξιλάσκομαι does not occur in the New Testament and is rare in the papyri. We have, however, ἱλάσκεσθαι Heb. 2, 17: ἵνα ἐλεήμων γένηται καὶ ποτὸς ἀρχιερεὺς τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεόν, εἰς τὸ ἱλάσκεσθαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ; "that he might become merciful and a faithful High Priest before God to propitiate [forgive] the sins of the people." Cp. Luke 18, 13, ἱλάσθητί μοι τῷ ἁμαρτωλῷ.

In the LXX particularly, the passive ἱλάσκεσθαι is "to be reconciled," "to be gracious," Ps. 25, 11; 78, 38; also ἱάσθητι, imperative aorist passive, Ps. 79, 9; Dan. 9, 19. While ἱλάσκεσθαι occurs only nine times in the entire Bible, it is all the more remarkable to note that the LXX much more frequently employs the more emphatic ἐξιλάσκεσθαι, to make *thoroughly* propitious, to *completely* reconcile.

In the New Testament, ἄφεσις or ἀφίημι are most frequent for "forgiveness" and "forgive," common to all evangelists, Paul, James, and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. A quick count shows that ἀφίημι and its forms occur 135 times. In the inscriptions the word often means "remission of debt," or "remission of punishment." Already the classics had this for the second meaning of the verb, viz., to "release," "let go free," "acquit," "deliver" — the perfect synonym of Latin *absolvo*, *libero*. A liturgical book of the fourth or the fifth century A. D. (the Egerton P. 5) has: "Σῆς ἀνεξικακίας ἔργον ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν," i. e., "Thy long-suffering's work is forgiveness of sin."

From *kaphar* comes *kapporeth*, in LXX ἱλαστήριον, the LXX's Greek for "mercy-seat," or the lid of gold covering the ark of the covenant, Ex. 25, Lev. 16. This, it will be remembered, was sprinkled once a year by the high priest with the blood of the goat on the head of which were confessed the sins of the people. In the New Testament this type is fulfilled in the antitype Christ Jesus. The *kapporeth*, also sometimes explained as the *place* of expiation, is more properly the expiatory *covering*, not only of the ark as depository of the Law but of the Law itself. It serves to receive the atoning blood. Not until the blood is on the *kapporeth*, is this

latter what it is meant to be, viz., the propitiation for the people's sins. The blood completely covers the Law and the multitude of the sins of the people. Thus the *kapporeth* becomes the central seat of the saving presence and gracious revelation of God.

Accordingly, our Lord Jesus Christ is designated the true ἱλαστήριον, Rom. 3, 25, for He, as the true High Priest and one all-sufficient Sacrifice, at the same time comes ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ αἵματι and not as the typical high priest of the Old Testament ἐν αἵματι ἄλλοτριῷ, which he had to discharge himself of by sprinkling it on the *kapporeth*. "Philo calls the *kapporeth* σύμβολον τῆς ἰλεω τοῦ θεοῦ δυνάμεως." (Cremer.)

To err is human, to forgive divine;  
 Forgiveness may, then, yet be mine!  
 The sinless lips have said, "Forgiven";  
 Pardon is, then, a gift divine  
 And love indeed a law of heaven."

There is forgiveness in the Scriptures from Moses to John the Theologian. The only theology worthy of the name is forgiveness theology, which is congruent with Bible theology and coincident with Lutheran theology; for "*quod non est biblicum, non est theologicum.*"

Let us look at divine forgiveness in the LXX. Ex. 25, 22: "And there will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat (τὸ ἱλαστήριον)." This gracious procedure of the Lord God Almighty is further made plain in Ex. 33, 11: "And the Lord spake unto Moses as a man speaketh unto his friend." The text has ἐνώπιος ἐνωπίῳ, literally, "eye to eye"; such is the close communion between God and His servant. Not servant only, but also friend, φίλος, for God has established the bond of friendship between Him and Abraham, the express φίλος θεοῦ, Jas. 2, 23; 2 Chron. 20, 7; Is. 41, 8, also upon Moses. In the New Dispensation we may well sing: "O Friend of souls, how blest am I!" The only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father authentically and truly declares the latter, John 15, 15, when He says: "Henceforth I call you not servants . . .; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you"—φίλοι, not δοῦλοι, what undeserved mercy! The Lord deigns to treat us not as inferiors outside the heavenly counsels, but as those who have a very definite share in His affection. We are again eye to eye with the *nosse cum affectu et effectu*. There is a double force in the fact that the LXX, speaking, as it does, in a Ptolemaic Greek, employs φίλος, a force fully felt only since a more voluminous deciphering of our papyrus treasures. It is now clear that φίλος was a specific title of honor given at the court of the Ptolemies to the highest royal officials. This ennobled



understanding of the simple word is supported by the fact that in Esther 2, 18 it was used by the LXX to render the Hebrew *sar*, "prince" in the King James Version. This, then, is the difference between the two words, not slaves but members of His royal court, His friends, having audience with Him and interested in the concerns of His kingdom. Forgiveness makes this friendship possible.

Again, from the Mount of the Law comes a mention of mercy, Ex. 34, 5—7: "And the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there." The cloud, ἐν νεφέλῃ, is used in the LXX for *shechinah*, the cloud of glory (cp. Ex. 16, 7. 10 *et al.*). The Lord stood with him there, παρέστη αὐτῷ ἐκεῖ; second aorist indicative of παρίστημι, a verb bringing to mind the "sure mercies of David" as we compare its use in the LXX and the New Testament, e. g., 2 Tim. 4, 17: ὁ δὲ κύριός μοι παρέστη καὶ ἐνεδυνάμωσέν με, "the Lord stood by me and strengthened me." In legal parlance of the fourth century A. D. the verb is frequently employed by attorneys assuring the court that their witness will be present and certainly "stand by" with their testimony so that justice can be satisfied, a usage that has come down from the LXX and the New Testament. (Cp. the numerous legal papyri in the Cairo Museum, especially Nos. 10,484, 10,493, 10,688, and 10,689.) Obviously, then, παρίστημι has the force of "standing by," ready to "support and uphold." To make such assurance doubly sure, the Lord stood by Moses, with a message of mercy unmistakably following: "And the Lord passed by before him and proclaimed the Lord" (and now divine Forgiveness inspired a divine characterization), "The Lord, a God full of compassion, and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, *forgiving* iniquity and transgression and sin." A linguistic study of this inspired sentence brings some interesting and at the same time consolatory facts to mind: Literally, the Lord proclaims Himself a "God of compassions and mercies," οἰκτίρων καὶ ἐλεήμων — οἰκτίρω, or Attic, οἰκτιρῶ, I pity, a verb exactly synonymous with ἐλεέω, I have pity on. This is also exactly the way in which ἐλεεῖν is used in the many petitionary papyri of the Greco-Roman period. So, for instance, the Fayum Papyrus No. 106, from 140 A. D., contains a petition by Dr. M. Valerius Gemellus to the praefectus of his circuit requesting to be relieved, partly on the ground of his busy profession, partly on account of his health, from his duties of superintendent to estates confiscated by the government. The sixteenth line of this petition is of special interest to us, where we read: Κύριε, σθέν ὀξιώ σοί τὸν σωτήρα ἐλεῆσαι με, "Lord, I entreat you, my redeemer, that you may have pity on me." This heaping of synonyms (to return to our text) again proclaims the sureness of God's mercy. The Lord is "slow to anger," μακρόθυμος, patient with people, long-suffering;

cp. μακροθυμέω, I defer my anger, I am long-suffering, I am not quick-tempered. He is also "plenteous in mercy and truth," πολυέλεος καὶ ἀληθινός (an emphatic parallel), full of mercy and (literally) made of truth; "keeping mercy for thousands," δικαιοσύνην διατηρῶν καὶ ἔλεος εἰς χιλιάδας, keeping righteousness and mercy for thousands, accusative plural of χιλιάς (in Deut. 7, 9 "for a thousand generations," εἰς χιλιάς γενεάς). Διατηρέω bears closer notice here; it denotes to hold fast, hold in safe keeping, to keep continually. Just as Mary continually kept Jesus' words in her heart, διετήρει, so God will not be forgetful of His mercies. Such is the divine economy that, as the Law is given, grace is promised in the same divine breath (δικαιοσύνην . . . καὶ ἔλεος). "Forgiving iniquity and transgressions and sin," ἀφαιρῶν, present participle of ἀφαιρέω, I take away. The term connotes complete removal; cp. Is. 27, 9; Jer. 31, 33, 34 as quoted in Rom. 11, 27, ὅταν ἀφέλωμαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν. This connotation is corroborated by a Christian papyrus prayer found in Heracleopolis Magna (the erstwhile capital of Dynasties 7—10 of the First Disintegration), where the same verb occurs in the line: "Take away from me all manner of disease and all manner of sickness that I may be in health." Here, assuredly, the petitioner prayed for a complete removal of his ailments. (Wilcken, *Archiv fuer Papyruskunde*, I, p. 431 ff.) Finally what is it that God takes away and out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy forgives? The answer is: ἀνομία, lawlessness, in particular as disobedience to the divine Law: sin; ἀδικία, unrighteousness (cp. ἀδικέω, I act unjustly) and ἁμαρτία, error, sin. Here, then, it is again: Sin and grace; the divine doctrine of forgiveness.

King Solomon utters prayer at the Temple dedication, and five times in succession his prayer pleads forgiveness, 1 Kings 8: "Hear Thou in heaven, Thy dwelling-place (οἰκητήριον, Latin *habitaculum*), and forgive." The LXX here has the adjective ἱεως for "forgive," the Attic form of ἱεος, literally, Thou shalt be merciful, propitious, forgiving. The Κοινή of both LXX and New Testament employs the prayerful interjection ἱεῶς σοι, i. e., ἱεως εἴη ὁ θεός. Luke 18, 13, which uses the aorist imperative of ἱλάσκειν, is pertinent here for comparison (see above). In their sixth volume of *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, Drs. Grenfell and Hunt list a "Letter to Flavianus" of the fourth century A. D. which plainly shows the New Testament sense of ἱεως. The papyrus is an affectionately worded Christian letter, according to all appearances from a servant to his master concerning the illness of his mistress. The style shows a decided influence of the New Testament, with a polish that reminds one of St. Luke: Καὶ εἴη διὰ παντὸς ἡμᾶς χάριτας ὁμολογοῦντας διατελεῖν ὅτι ἡμῖν ἱεως ἐγένετο καὶ ταῖς εὐχαῖς ἡμῶν ἐπένευσεν σωσας ἡμῖν τὴν ἡμῶν κυρίαν: "And may it be granted us to continue

forever to acknowledge our thanks to Him because He was gracious to us and inclined His ear to our prayers by preserving for us our mistress." (P. Oxyr. 939, 6—9.) According to Hesychius ἡλεως was of the same meaning as ἡλαρός and also attributed to the gods the same quality as ἡλαρός does to men, only with the transitive notion that this graciousness and cheerfulness is the source of good will towards men. In the Bible it is the divine attribute which exists in God, that gracious sentiment that opposes the imputation of sin. Cf. Num. 14, 19: "Ἀφες τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τῷ λαῷ τούτῳ κατὰ τὸ μέγα ἔλεός σου, καθάπερ ἔλεως αὐτοῖς ἐγένου. In the New Testament see Heb. 8, 12: ἡλεως ἔσομαι ταῖς ἀδικίαις αὐτῶν, from Jer. 31, 34.

In this connection should be noted the very profundity of Solomon's prayer in the same chapter, vv. 38. 39: "What prayer and supplication soever be made (πᾶσαν προσευχήν, all prayer that possibly should ever be made, γένηται, futuristic subjunctive, second aorist) by any man or by all Thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, . . . *forgive* and *do* and *give* to every man according to his ways, whose heart Thou knowest, for Thou, even Thou only, knowest (μονώτατος οἶδας—superlative of μόνος, alone; 'as God alone knows' the hearts of all the children of men."

Forgiveness is also the burden of Solomon's night vision in 2 Chron. 7, 12. 14. "The Lord appeared to Solomon by night and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer. . . . If thy people shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will *forgive* (ἡλεως ἔσομαι) their sin." Here are noteworthy the four subjunctives with ἐάν:

1. Ἐντραπή, from ἐντρέπω, turn to shame and confusion; cp. 1 Cor. 4, 14, where St. Paul tells the Corinthians that he is not writing thus to shame, or humiliate, them: Οὐκ ἐντρέπων ὑμᾶς γράφω ταῦτα. Also Tit. 2, 8: ἐντραπή. The celebrated and somewhat amusing letter of Apollonius (Paris Papyrus No. 47, 153 B. C.), whose faith in the gods of his father, Ptolemaeus, foundered badly when he was lost in a great forest, has: "But for the fact that I am a little ashamed (ἐντρέπομαι), you would never yet have seen my face; all things are false, and your gods with the rest." This late metaphorical use of the verb is found in the LXX and the New Testament as we have seen. For further comparison of its usage there see 2 Thess. 3, 14 and Luke 7, 6.

2. Προσεύξωνται, from πρὸς and εὐχομαι, pray.

3. Ζητήσωσιν, from ζητέω, Latin *quaero*, I search for. The verb occurs in the sense of to "strive" in an imperial edict concerning the *Aurum Coronarium*, in the late third century A. D. (P. Fayum

20, 14.) The emperor, most likely Alexander Severus, writes: "Ever since I became Caesar, I have earnestly striven (ζητήσεν) to restore vigor to what was in decline."

4. Ἀποστρέψω, from ἀποστρέφω, I turn myself away from.

Before advancing this study on forgiveness to a few representative New Testament instances, it must be mentioned that there is a further promise of forgiveness through most of the remainder of the Old Testament, such as Ps. 86, 5; 103, 3; Is. 33, 24; 55, 7; Jer. 3, 12; 31, 20. 34; 33, 8; Dan. 9, 9; Micah 7, 18, and many more.

The New Testament is replete with various classic examples of forgiveness. Let our first be that of the paralytic in the house at Capernaum, Matt. 9, 2: "Be of good cheer, son; thy sins are forgiven thee": θάρσει, τέκνον, ἀφέωνταί σου αἱ ἁμαρτίαι. Ἀφέωνται is a Doric form used instead of ἀφείνται, perfect passive of ἀφίημι. At this time the μ-verbs are more and more disappearing in the Κοινή in favor of the omega inflection. It marks the beginning of the end of this special class of verb. In the Κοινή the old forms still continue besides the new ones for some time. Those formed according to the omega pattern appear in the lower language strata first, but gradually they penetrate even into literary texts. A present tense ἀφίω is found as early as the second century B. C. We meet with it in well-authenticated New Testament variants. The Acta Thomae have the analogical subjunctive ἀφήση. Our own form of ἀφέωνται becomes more frequent following the Apostolic Fathers. It is already common in the second century A. D. (*Inscr. Ponti* II, 401. 15); note especially the Liturgical Fragment, P. Amherst, I, 44: ἀφέωνται and ἀφείοντε. The form also occurs in the Ionic; the Arcadian dialect had ἀφεώσθη.

The Gospel of forgiveness is preached Luke 7 to the penitent woman in the house of Simon the Pharisee: "Thy sins are forgiven": ἀφέωνταί σου αἱ ἁμαρτίαι. Although Mark employs ἐλεέω, the moving story of blind Bartimaeus should be included here, for these three, the paralytic, the penitent woman, and Bartimaeus, belong together in any study on forgiveness. The scholarly Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was so impressed by the genius of the Greek in this Gospel that he wrote his song

#### Blind Bartimaeus

Blind Bartimaeus at the gates  
Of Jericho in darkness waits.  
He hears the crowd; he hears a breath  
Say, "It is Christ of Nazareth."  
And calls in tongues of agony,  
'Ιησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με!

The thronging multitudes increase.  
 "Blind Bartimaeus, hold thy peace!"  
 But still above the noisy crowd  
 The beggar's cry is shrill and loud,  
 Until they say, "He calleth Thee."  
 Θάρσει, ἔγειραι, φωνεῖ σε!

Then saith the Christ as silent stands  
 The crowd, "What wilt thou at My hands?"  
 And he replies, "Oh, give me light!  
 Rabbi, restore the blind man's sight!"  
 And Jesus answers, "Υπαγε·  
 Ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε!

Ye that have eyes that cannot see  
 In darkness and in misery,  
 Recall those mighty voices three,  
 Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με!  
 Θάρσει, ἔγειραι! Ὑπαγε·  
 Ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε!

Our authority κατ' ἐξοχήν on forgiveness is the Father's only-begotten Son, who, being "in the bosom" of the Father and therefore knowing His innermost thoughts and will of grace, can well "declare" Him unto us. Even in Jesus' darkest hour of woe He still so "declares" Him amidst the shuddering populace when He calls on the Father's mercy for the sake of others, including His bitter enemies, Luke 23, 34: "Father forgive them": Πάτερ, ἄφεες αὐτοῖς (second aorist imperative).

It is for this same purpose that the Father's will to forgive be made known at home and abroad that Jesus turns Saul, the persecutor, and says to him, Acts 26, 15—18: "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose to make thee a minister and a witness, . . . delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God that they may receive forgiveness of sins," ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν. How blessed for us indeed that Paul was "not disobedient to the heavenly vision, τῇ οὐρανίῳ ὁπτασίᾳ," to offer and proclaim forgiveness of sins to his hearers.

The last sacred writer of our Canon shall conclude our *ex-cursus* into the heavenly field of forgiveness as we read once more 1 John 2, 1, 2: Καὶ ἐάν τις ἁμάρτη, παράκλητον ἔχομεν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν δίκαιον· καὶ αὐτὸς ἰλασμός ἐστιν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν, οὐ περὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων δὲ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου. Again, chap. 4, 10: Ἐν τούτῳ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγάπη, οὐχ ὅτι ἡμεῖς ἠγαπήκαμεν τὸν θεόν, ἀλλ' ὅτι αὐτὸς ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς καὶ ἀπέστειλεν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ



ἰλασμοὺν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν. Here the Scripture has our last ἰλασμός, the very same ἰλασμός that flows so freely from the mercy-seat, the *kapporeth* of Moses, down to the ἰλαστήριον of Greek-speaking and -writing Christianity. There is forgiveness from Moses to John, throughout the Scriptures, and a study of the LXX and the Greek of the New Testament brings rich reward in a fuller appreciation of its soul-cleansing force and universal application.

Chaplain U. S. Army

RICHARD T. DU BRAU

## Outlines on Gospels Adopted by Synodical Conference

### First Sunday after Easter

Matt. 12:38-42

Context: The rising and increasing conflict. Then text.

#### Are You Looking for Special Signs on Which to Base Your Faith in Christ as Your Savior and Redeemer?

1. *Christ has given you the pre-eminent sign in His resurrection*
2. *If you reject this sign, your doom is sealed.*

#### I

V. 38. The scribes and Pharisees sought a sign. Cp. Matt. 16:1; John 2:18. But did they not have occasion to see many of His signs and miracles? Yes, indeed, vv. 12, 22; Matt. 11:5; John 21:25. But they wanted a very special sign, perhaps like the one recorded 1 Kings 18:38.

Vv. 39 b, 40. The Lord directed them to a pre-eminent sign that would prove Him to be the Son of God and the Redeemer of the world, a sign that would surpass all other signs, the sign of the Prophet Jonah, which pointed forward to the Lord's resurrection. Jonah 1:17. Are you among the sign seekers? Perhaps not, at least not in a class with those spoken of in the text. But are you not somewhat impressed by the signs and miracles reported from Lourdes, Treves, and other so-called holy shrines? Or the "miracles" of Christian Science and other so-called divine healers? Remember that the Apostle Paul tells us in the name of Christ that he who is described 2 Thess. 2:4 is coming "with all power and signs and *lying* wonders," 2 Thess. 2:9. Christ Himself warns us against the signs and wonders of false Christs and false prophets, Matt. 24:14. Or do you find yourself wishing that your Church could perform some outstanding miracle so that your faith would have something tangible to stand on? Do not forget that your senses can be deceived, as are the senses of many others,

into taking signs and lying wonders to be the real thing. You do not want to rest your faith upon deceptions, but upon the sure and everlasting Word of God. Cp. John 4:48. When the Christian Church was first established in the world, signs and wonders were given; now that it is firmly established, they are no longer needed. — Or do you wish that you could have seen the miracles of Christ with your own eyes because it would then be easier to believe? The Jews saw them and yet did not believe. John 12:37. Miracles are no means of grace. Christ does not perform them to satisfy mere curiosity. Matt. 13:58. They were His credentials which proved Him to be the Son of God and the Savior of the world (cp. John 11:4, 5 with Is. 35:5, 6) and are recorded in God's Word for your sake. John 20:31.

He has given you the sign of all signs — His resurrection. Keep in mind all that preceded His resurrection: His life, His death — all for you. And His resurrection! What a sign! Read Rom. 1:4; 4:25; John 14:19; 11:25, 26. Do not look for other signs. V. 39 b.

2

V. 39. Christ is addressing not only the scribes and Pharisees, but also those who, like their leaders, refused to accept His miracles for what they were, and rejected Him and His message. He calls them an evil generation, steeped in every kind of wickedness. An adulterous generation, spiritual adulterers. Cp. Jer. 3:20. They would continue in their opposition in spite of all that He did to bring them to repentance. Now He tells them of their doom.

V. 41. Jonah was a mere man, a sinful man; but here was the Son of God Himself. Jonah was a Prophet sent by God; but here was the Author of the message Himself. The Jews refused to repent and hardened their hearts. Small wonder that the Ninevites would condemn them.

V. 42. A greater than Solomon is here. In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom. Col. 2:3. In fact, He is the personal Wisdom. Prov. 8:12; vv. 22-36. But to Him the Jews would not hearken. Small wonder that the queen of the South will rise up in Judgment. They seal their own doom.

Do you reject the miracles of Christ, especially the pre-eminent sign of His resurrection? Then you are also rejecting all that preceded it — His life, His death. Then your doom is sealed. Cp. 1 Cor. 15:12-19. It is true, there will be another sign — the sign of the Son of Man. Matt. 24:30. But when this sign will appear, then it will forever be too late to repent.

But you are Christians. You do not intend to reject any of the miracles of Christ, least of all His resurrection. By the grace of God you are determined to cling to Christ, the Son of God and

your personal Redeemer. Heb. 10:39. But you and I are in constant need of warning against apostasy. 1 Cor. 10:12. Besides, there is the constant danger of deceiving ourselves into believing that all is well, that we are firmly established in our faith, while in reality it is nothing but sham. We are so easily beset with doubts that endanger our faith. Let us by the grace of God stand firm, refresh our faith by diligent use of the Word of God and the Sacrament. And let us pray without ceasing. Mark 9:24.

R. NEITZEL

## Second Sunday after Easter

John 10:1-11

"The more abundant life!" Again and again it is promised to the suffering masses. And when life continues abundant in nothing but sorrow, war, trouble, they are disillusioned, become cynical. Why?

The reason is that the term is abused, misrepresented, and misunderstood. Good, therefore, that all of us study text, verse 10 b, which presents

### The Truth About "the More Abundant Life"

#### 1. Who first promised it.

Text. Modern statesmen are credited with coining the term. But the truth is—they have merely appropriated it. Verse 10 b, "life more abundantly," proves its author was Jesus, that Jesus who in the same passage solemnly asserted that He is "no thief come to steal, kill, destroy," vv. 1, 8, 10, but a "true, good Shepherd come to give His life that men may have life," vv. 2, 11.

Application: Consider well, *Jesus* is the Author. Since He coined the term "more abundant life," it may well arrest our attention. Since He, the ever faithful, self-sacrificing, life-giving Shepherd promised it, we may well put confidence in it. As it came from His sacred lips, we can be sure this is no mere campaign pledge or politician's slogan. Bear that in mind!

#### 2. But what did He mean by it?

Text. Modern reformers claim He meant material life more abundant in wealth, peace, leisure, etc. But the truth is—He predicted no earthly abundance, rather "much tribulation." And v. 10 b in its context proves He meant a spiritual life more abundant in (1) salvation, vv. 9, 11: "shall be saved"; (2) spiritual knowledge, vv. 3, 4: "know His voice"; (3) divine fellowship, v. 4: "callesth by name, goeth before." A glorious spiritual life, abounding in spiritual blessings!

*Application:* Of course, in that kind of "more abundant life" our materialistic age is not interested; it dreams only of material abundance. (Chiliasts also.) That "a man's life consisteth not in abundance of things," Luke 12:13, it does not understand. Yet it is evident that without Christ's saving Word (John 6:63: "are life") the most abundant material life is bare existence. Nay, worse, Rom. 8:6: "To be carnally minded is *death*." But to be "spiritually minded is life." Oh, be careful, therefore, to cherish the life of faith in Christ!

### 3. *How men can obtain it.*

*Text.* Materialists say such life is beyond reach. But the truth is—Christ has put it within reach of all. V. 10 b He declares "they might *have* it." And to show how easily, He uses illustrations of sheep "hearing," "knowing," "following," shepherd's voice, "entering door," vv. 4, 7, 9. So simple! Hear Christ's saving Word. Act upon it by entering upon enjoyment of His salvation. Then you are no longer dead in sin, but alive, having life, and always more abundantly.

*Application:* What a contrast to the difficulties of obtaining more abundant material life! How world has studied and worked through science, education, invention, political reform, bloodless revolutions, bloody wars, legislation, etc., to attain it. And still we have never had more universal sorrow, death, hunger, etc., and more lovelessness, immorality, etc. Thank God, Christ's "life more abundantly" is not so unobtainable. He gives it freely, without our doing. Simply take it by faith!

### 4. *How real and certain it is.*

*Text.* Materialists scorn it as visionary, uncertain. But the truth is—nothing is more real and sure. Christ's verse 10 b is prefaced with two asseverations: "Verily, verily, I say unto you," vv. 1, 7. A double Amen, intimating the certainty and reality of it. This life, given to dead soul, with abounding salvation, pardon, peace, power, comfort, hope eternal—is no dream, no escape mechanism, but a glorious, positive reality.

*Application:* How illusive and unreal, on the other hand, is the modern's dream of a materially abundant life! Think of Europe, which was promised peace for a thousand years! But Christ has never disappointed. In every age, amid terrors and afflictions, His believers have had His promised life with all its abundant treasures. Though, like Paul, they were crucified with Christ, suffering, dying—they could shout exuberantly: "Nevertheless we *live*; yet not we, but Christ liveth in us!" Gal. 2:20. A. WAGNER

### Third Sunday after Easter

Mark 2:18-22

The traditional pericope for this Sunday points out the sweet blessedness which the disciples of Christ enjoy, John 16:16-23. (a) After their little while of sorrow they shall have endless, perfect joy. (b) Their prayers, addressed to God in Christ's name, are truly heard. — Because of their tribulation, Christians must constantly be shown how blessed they are in view of their divine, living Savior, whose own they are. Our text speaks of

#### The Blessedness of Christ's Disciples

They are blessed

1. *Because their Savior is with them*
2. *Because their Savior has made them free*

#### I

A. It is obvious why the disciples of John and of the Pharisees asked Jesus the question in v. 18. John had been put into prison, Mark 1:14. Their fasting was no doubt a token of mourning, v. 20. But John's disciples were also in error; they had not obeyed their master's message, John 1:29-51; they did not believe in Christ, Matt. 11:2 ff. For this reason they found fault with Christ's disciples, as also with Christ Himself, against whom really the charge was raised. So today unbelievers often prefer charges against Christ's disciples which have their source in unbelief, hatred, envy, and the like.

B. Christ answered the question put to Him readily and without qualification. His disciples had no reason to fast or mourn because He was with them and so theirs constantly was the joy of a spiritual wedding feast. They could apply the words of Psalm 23 to themselves (supply examples of Christ's never-failing love). As the divine Truth, Christ foretold that the Bridegroom would be taken from them, so that they then would fast (mourn), v. 20. But before that took place, He comforted and strengthened them (cf. John, chaps. 14-17), and as soon as His work of redemption was finished, He greeted them with the message of peace (cp. John 20:19 ff.). Really Christ never left His disciples, though they had left Him. Even His ascension did not remove His presence from them, Matt. 28:19 f.

C. To this day Christ's disciples enjoy the blessedness of His gracious presence: (a) His presence in the means of grace, the Word and the Sacraments, Rom. 10:6 ff.; (b) His presence throughout their lives, Ps. 73:23 ff.; (c) His presence in tribulation, Acts 5:19 ff.; 2 Cor. 12:7 ff.; (d) His presence in death, Acts 7:55 ff.



Men trusting in men are never blessed; even John was helpless to protect his disciples after he had been cast into prison. But blessed are all disciples of Christ, for in His constant, omnipotent, defending, guiding, and guarding presence they find joy unspeakable, 2 Tim. 4:6 ff.

2

A. Just because the disciples of John did not believe in Christ, they relapsed into the bondage of the Jewish Ceremonial Law, regarding fasting as necessary (cf. Luke 18:10 ff.) and making common cause against Christ with the disciples of the Pharisees. Vv. 21, 22 must be regarded as a severe rebuke (cf. Luke 5:39, a reproof) for holding to the old garment and the old bottles of the Ceremonial Law. Christ had come with new cloth and new wine to bring men spiritual freedom, and with this new spiritual freedom in view, His disciples no longer had to fast or observe any other provision of the Old Testament Ceremonial Law, in which the Pharisees took so much pride (cf. Matt. 12:1 ff.). Christ's Gospel freedom did not comport with the bondage of the ceremonial directives, Gal. 5:1 ff.

B. As Christ's true disciples we, too, find constant blessedness in the freedom with which Christ has made us free, John 8:31, 32. Our freedom in Christ (a) from the Ceremonial Law, Gal. 5:1 ff.; (b) from the curse and condemnation of the Moral Law, Gal. 3:13; (c) from sin, the transgression of the Law, 1 Cor. 15:3; (d) from death, 1 Cor. 15:55 ff.; (e) from hell, Matt. 25:46; (f) from Satan, 1 John 3:8. In Christ Jesus we have freedom from all our spiritual foes and are therefore unspeakably blessed already now as we walk by faith.

C. This blessedness remains ours only as we cling to Christ. If we adhere to men in opposition to Christ, we fall under the condemnation of Christ's reproof in our text. May we remain sincere disciples of Christ, our blessed Savior.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

### Fourth Sunday after Easter

John 5:19-29

God knows you. Ps. 139:1-4. Do you know God? John 1:18. "By Thy Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of Thee and of Thy will." This prayer is answered also today; for in the text

### Jesus Christ Affirms His Deity

We learn to believe and confess

1. *This is the true God*
2. *This is eternal Life*

## 1

A. Doctrine. In answer to the Jews, Jesus refers to the trinitarian relation, vv. 19, 20. The activity and work of the Trinity is not parted or separate. It is but one action and work, each Person performing with the other Persons the same and identical act, all co-ordinately, in unity of wisdom and power. Jesus identifies Himself here as a Person of the Trinity. — The Son of Man and the Son of God (vv. 27, 25) appears as the identical Person. The Savior of mankind is a Person of the Trinity, the true God. Rom. 9:5; John 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:1; Titus 2:13. — Jesus displays visible divine works, which He mentions in His affirmation: vv. 19, 20, referring to all divine works, and vv. 25, 28, 27, 29 to specific divine works. — Jesus reveals a complete knowledge of God and of His will and works, v. 20. He is omniscient, Col. 2:9. In fact, all divine attributes shine forth from this affirmation in all their brilliant splendor. — Jesus affirms His identity under oath, v. 19. — Nor did He make Himself equal with God, v. 18; for He is God. What Christ does is done of God. Our Lutheran Confessions are right, and our personal faith in Christ as God is the true faith. — Because He is the true God, v. 23 must be proclaimed with force, power, and joy.

B. Reproof. V. 23 b. All who deny the deity of Christ are idolaters, 1 John 5:21, though they may aver a faith in Him a thousand times. What a terrific blow to antichristian lodgery, to Modernism, cults, etc.

C. Comfort. We worship the true God, not mental images. — God is our Savior. — The Gospel, with all its promises, is true. — God uses all His divine attributes in behalf of His Church and of the individual believer. — Our trust and reliance is rightly placed in Jesus Christ. — Our prayers to Him are heard and answered by Him.

## 2

A. Doctrine. God is the living God. His life is underived and independent. Ps. 90:2. As the Father, even so the Son (v. 26): Life in the Son is the same and exists in the same manner as in the Father. But the Father has committed life to the Son in His official capacity as Savior and Mediator. The entire Christ, the God-man, is eternal Life. John 1:4; 11:25; 10:18. What majesty is His! — Christ imparts life to whom He will, v. 21: physical life, John 11:43; Luke 7:14; Mark 5:41; spiritual life, v. 25; and to the true believer He has already given eternal life, v. 24. — Again an oath, v. 24. — We confess: This is the true God and eternal Life.

B. Reproof and warning. The eternal God-man is the Judge. None can escape Him. They shall hear His voice (which they dis-

regarded), and they shall come forth (though they denied the resurrection), v. 25. — Prepare for the resurrection day! For there will be a simultaneous resurrection of believers and unbelievers, vv. 28, 29; Heb. 10:31; 12:25-29. The believers already are in possession of eternal life, vv. 24, 29. The unbelievers will rise to their eternal doom, because they rejected the living Giver of life, v. 29. Repent and seek life in Christ. — Again an oath.

C. Comfort. We believers have eternal life as certainly as we have Him. John 10:11, 15, 28; 11:25-27. This is victory. Jesus and I: we live. Ps. 42:11. Jesus reveals and identifies Himself as my Life. Col. 3:4.

G. H. SMUKAL

### Fifth Sunday after Easter

Luke 18:1-8

The lesson of the parable is stated v. 1: "Men ought always to pray and not to faint." Not merely prayer in general is the subject of our Lord's parable, but specifically persistent prayer in the face of conditions that would discourage suppliants, cause them to "faint," to tire of, and discontinue their prayers as hopeless.

We are in need of this lesson in our days.

#### "Men Ought Always to Pray and Not to Faint"

Note

1. *The danger of fainting*
2. *The encouragement to persevere in prayer*

#### 1

A. Text. The widow in the parable was confronted with discouraging conditions.

a) Evidently her "adversary" was powerful and influential and she a helpless widow. Widows in Orient synonyms of helplessness. Matt. 23:14.

b) The character of the judge, vv. 2, 4. Neither of the motives which usually prompt men to do right and refrain from wrong influenced this judge. Brazenly boasts of his disregard of God and man. What hope of redress had the widow with such a judge!

c) "For a while," probably a long time. Little wonder if she had given up in despair!

B. Application: (a) Similar discouraging conditions arise for the Church, ever opposed by powerful adversaries — Satan and the world — and in the lives and the experience of individual Christians. Time and again in the course of her history the Church appeared utterly helpless, *e. g.*, the times of persecution. And in the lives of God's elect conditions arise that seem utterly

beyond control. The common ills of life. — Present world conditions. How helpless we are!

b) The fact that God seemingly delays. 1. The parable refers to the last coming of the Lord for the final deliverance of His Church (chap. 17:22 ff.), for which His elect fervently pray. How long the days of great tribulations of the last days! Many indeed will "faint" and lose faith. V. 8.

2. But the parable applies also to circumstances in general, when in the lives of Christians prayers seem unheard and trials continue. How fervent the prayers today! And still the carnage, the cares and anxieties, the griefs and the heartaches, go on. From many a Christian heart the cry goes up: Ps. 22:2. — Yes, there is danger of "fainting."

But the Lord offers ample and effective encouragement in the parable.

## 2

A. Text. The widow in the parable finally prevailed over the unjust judge to "avenge" her. She "came." The tense in the original indicates her persistent, continual coming. Though only for reasons of self-interest, to rid himself of her continual pleading and avoid further annoyance, the judge finally avenged her. — So despite all discouraging conditions the widow's perseverance in pleading obtained the desired redress.

B. Application. Vv. 6-8 a. (a) The parable gives emphatic assurance that persevering prayer will prevail. The argument is from the lesser to the greater, from the human to the divine. Its convincing force lies in the contrasts suggested. 1. The judge is unjust, corrupt, and selfish. — God is righteous, loving, full of compassion. 2. The unjust judge had no interest in the widow. There was no relationship to encourage her hope. — God loves His elect with an everlasting love. They are His precious, blood-bought own. Ps. 103:13.

b) V. 8 a. God's seeming delay is not actual delay. "Speedily" He will avenge. Time is of the essence of help. The speediest help is that which comes at the right time, which God in His wisdom knows best. (Elsewhere in Scripture abundant light is thrown upon God's purpose of love in seeming delay.) In His own time, and that is "speedily," God will help in answer to prayer. That is the emphatic promise of the parable.

c) Faith in God's promises, in His love and truth, should prompt us to persevere in prayer, not sheer stubborn insistence. Cf. Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, Vol. II, p. 285. Such was the perseverance of Jacob, Gen. 32:26; and that of the Syro-phenician woman, Matt. 15:21-28. — God grant us such faith and resultant perseverance in prayer till its glorious vindication. — Hymn 520:10, 11.

AUG. F. BERNTHAL

---

## Miscellanea

---

### The Doctrinal Affirmation

Ever since it was announced that representatives of the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church had agreed on a unified statement of doctrine, publication of this "single document" has been eagerly awaited by all who have been following the movement toward Lutheran union. This "Doctrinal Affirmation" was published early in October and has recently been sent to all pastors of our Wisconsin Synod.

According to the foreword the procedure followed in drawing up this Affirmation consisted "chiefly in inserting into the framework of the Brief Statement the additional truths and clarifications contained in the other documents," viz., the Minneapolis Theses of 1930, the Declaration and Resolutions of the A.L.C. of 1938, and the Resolutions of the Missouri Synod of 1938. It will therefore be interesting to note to what extent the Brief Statement has been modified by these insertions, and what the implications of these modifications may be.

Here it is indeed gratifying to observe that many articles of the original Brief Statement have been left unchanged, and that applies not only to points on which there was little or no difference in the past (the articles of God, of Creation, of Man and of Sin, of Redemption, of Faith in Christ, of Good Works, of Church and State, of the Symbols of the Lutheran Church), but also to matters which were in controversy (the articles of the Public Ministry, of Sunday, of Open Questions). But of greater importance is the fact that in a matter where there was so much controversy—the Doctrine of Conversion—the presentation of the Brief Statement is accepted with but one minor addition, a specific rejection of the Calvinistic error of irresistible grace, an antithesis to which no Synodical Conference Lutheran will take exception. We are also happy to record that the article on Justification has been retained verbatim, and that in the section on Election the Brief Statement's rejection of *intuitu fidei* stands, together with Acts 13:48 as proof passage.

All of these gratifying achievements to which we wish to give ungrudging recognition do not relieve us of the necessity of subjecting the changes which do appear to closest scrutiny. Before one can arrive at a final verdict, it must even be asked whether, in view of later developments, articles written in 1932 still cover all issues adequately. The simultaneous negotiations which the A.L.C. is carrying on with the United Lutheran Church on the question of inspiration make it necessary to weigh this article in the Affirmation with special care. The future relations of the A.L.C. to its sister synods will also, in the event of its acceptance of the Affirmation, have greater bearing than ever upon our evaluation of its position. But in all this it should be far easier than before to retain an objective attitude in the studies which must now be undertaken.

E. R. in *Theologische Quartalschrift*, January, 1945



**A Reply to Dr. Gohdes' Article on the Lord's Supper by  
George W. Forell in the "Lutheran Church Quarterly"  
of January, 1945 \***

"In his article in the October issue of the *Lutheran Church Quarterly*, 'A Review of the Traditional Lutheran Position on the Lord's Supper,' Dr. C. B. Gohdes attempted to clarify the Lutheran position and to eliminate 'irrelevant processes of reasoning' and their objectionable results in the present formulation of the doctrine. He came to the conclusion that the doctrine of the essential and substantial presence of Christ in the Sacrament is unreasonable and untenable.

"Since a discussion of the Lord's Supper and a re-thinking of the doctrine of the Real Presence are always helpful, this article is to be welcomed. But in order that such a discussion may be fruitful, it is necessary to go somewhat deeper into all the facts that were involved in the formulation of this peculiarly Lutheran doctrine. This doctrine has been material in defining and limiting Lutheranism in relation to Romanism. And it was again this doctrine that defined and limited the Lutheran Church in relation to the various groups in the Reformed tradition. In other words, this doctrine is not the result of careless reasoning and phrasing on the part of the framers of our Lutheran Confessions. On the contrary, it has been more carefully studied, discussed, and expounded than almost any other doctrine of the church. It is therefore not possible to shrug it off as the result of the use of some 'inapplicable prooftexts' and of 'irrelevant processes of reasoning.' When we speak of the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper, we speak of a focal point in Evangelical Lutheran faith. Although this fact should not awe us into silence, it must constantly be kept in mind. At the same time this doctrine is so important that it must frequently be reviewed.

"The reviewer of a doctrine, set forth in its present form in the sixteenth century, must also remember, however, that words and concepts which may have been meaningful at one time often change or even lose their meaning. It is therefore necessary to investigate not merely the words as written down in the Confessions, but also to study the motives that led to their formulation. The authors of the Confessions had a burning desire to preserve the truth. They may have used odd words to express this truth, but we must try to look beyond the letter to apprehend the spirit that took form in the letter.

"If we try to study the development of the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper from this point of view, we notice that it was formulated against the background of current distortions of this sacrament. In the controversy with Rome, the sacramental magic and the anti-social character of the Mass had to be corrected. In the controversy with Zwingli and the Enthusiasts, humanistic rationalism and mystical subjectivism had to be opposed. However, in both instances the motive behind the Lutheran formulation was identical. In both cases it was

---

\* Reprinted with the permission of the *Lutheran Church Quarterly*.

Lutheran Christology which found its expression in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Against Rome the honor of the Lord Jesus Christ had to be defended. Against those who were not satisfied with Christ's death on the cross and felt the need to repeat Christ's sacrifice every time a priest said a mass, the uniqueness and sufficiency of the sacrifice on Calvary had to be upheld. But against the Enthusiasts and Zwinglians it was necessary to defend the doctrine of Christ's incarnation. Indeed, the Lutheran position in regard to the Lord's Supper is so completely dependent upon Christology that it cannot be understood apart from two scholastic concepts in regard to the person of Christ. The one concept is the so-called *communicatio idiomatum*, the other the 'ubiquity' of Christ. Of course, both words are meaningless in themselves, but they are used to help express and define something that is essential for our faith. It is therefore regrettable that in the review under discussion these concepts, basic for the peculiar phraseology of the Confessions, are not considered at all.

"But what is it that these scholastic terms are intended to convey? The doctrine of the *communicatio idiomatum* holds that in the person of Christ the divine nature communicates its attributes to the human nature and vice versa. In other words, it was God who died on the Cross just as much as it was God who was born of the Virgin Mary. Everything that Jesus did and suffered, God did and suffered. This doctrine alone gives the full meaning to the life and death of Jesus Christ. Here God is actually speaking to us. Here the infinite becomes finite, so that we as finite beings can behold the glory of God.

"Against this concept of the *communicatio idiomatum* Zwingli claimed that the interchange of attributes in the person of Christ is merely a rhetorical interchange; so that, strictly speaking, Christ died only according to His human nature, and only according to His divine nature is He always with us. According to His human nature He is localized somewhere in heaven.

"For the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, Zwingli's view meant that the body of Christ cannot be both in the elements and in heaven. He therefore rejected the Real Presence. Luther's view meant that if Christ is at all present in the sacramental elements, He is also essentially and substantially present, for Christ is always true man and true God. It is not possible to have Christ present according to one nature only. It was this doctrine of the *communicatio idiomatum* that is responsible for our Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Therefore, in order to reject the doctrine of the Real Presence as presented in the Confessions, one must first reject this doctrine of the interchange of attributes in the person of Christ.

"But now a new question arose. *How* could Christ be present in, with, and under the elements of the sacrament? Zwingli had said that Christ cannot be bodily in the sacrament since He is in heaven at the right hand of God. And he concluded that Christ cannot be bodily in two places at the same time. Against this rationalistic and materialistic conception, Luther said that God is in Christ and Christ is in God and God is everywhere. Therefore Jesus Christ, the God-Man, fills heaven

and earth. But let Luther speak for himself: 'It is our faith, as Scripture teaches, that our Lord Jesus Christ is essentially, naturally, and really God. And the fullness of God's nature is embodied in Him, as St. Paul says Col. 2. Outside of Christ there is no God or divinity, as Jesus Himself says in John 16: "Philip, he who sees Me, he sees the Father; don't you believe that the Father is in Me and I am in the Father?" Well, here Christ walks on earth, and the entire Godhead is personally and substantially present in Him on earth. Now tell me, how can it be true that God be at the same time totally present in Christ—on earth, in His mother's womb, in the crib, in the Temple, in the desert, in the towns, in houses, gardens, fields, on the Cross, in the grave, etc.—and yet be in heaven in the bosom of the Father? If this is true—and according to faith it cannot be contradicted—we must conclude that He is simultaneously everywhere and essentially and personally fills the heaven and the earth—in short, everything—with His own nature and majesty' (WA., XXIII:138, 14).

"This is the Lutheran doctrine of the ubiquity. From this point of view it is comparatively easy to understand how Christ can be present in, with, and under the sacramental elements. Indeed, He is not only present in these elements but everywhere and in everything. However, here we must make an important distinction between His general presence in everything and His special presence in the sacramental elements. Luther said that Christ is present in every creature, in stone, in fire, and in water, but he added that *for you* He is only present where He has promised His presence in His Word (WA., XIX:492). It is therefore only in the Sacrament of the Altar that we receive Christ bodily, essentially, and substantially. Only in the sacrament has He assured us His presence in His Word. Only here is He bodily present *for us*.

"This is the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper. This doctrine is deeply rooted in the Lutheran Christology. It is a result of our faith that the same Christ who could not be contained by the universe became an infant in the arms of Mary. It is a result of our faith in the reality of the incarnation and the eternal God-Manhood of Christ.

"If we want to discard this doctrine of the essential and substantial presence of Christ in the sacrament, we will have to change our entire Evangelical Lutheran Christology. Some may consider such a change necessary. It may be more reasonable to believe in a God who in sublime transcendence rules the world. But such a God is not the God of the Bible.

"The Christian Church through the ages has maintained that God is not only sublimely transcendent but that He became man and that He suffered and died for a suffering and dying humanity. And He did this not merely rhetorically, but essentially and substantially. Because this suffering and compassionate God is the God of the Bible, He is also the God of the Lutheran Confessions. Because Luther and the framers of our Confessions knew something about Him, they wrote of the Real Presence in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Not their 'irrelevant reasoning' nor their 'prooftexts' nor even 'Aristotelian logic,'

but the doctrine of Christ is the issue in this discussion. Our doctrine of the essential and substantial presence of Christ in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a result of our doctrine of the incarnation. Only if we are ready to discard both can we discard one. And as long as we are guided by the Bible, we will discard neither."

### **Wants Undiluted Lutheranism**

Being in the Army for some time has given me plenty of opportunity to observe Lutherans and Lutheran churches away from home.

As to individuals, I find some who are loyal to their Church regardless of where they are. These, I'm sorry to say, are not in the majority. Then there are those who go to church "when they feel like it," or to any church they feel like. They attend Holy Communion at an Army chapel service for Baptists, Methodists, Adventists, etc., even though a Lutheran service is available. They say there's no difference.

Who's to blame? The individuals? The Church at home? Or congregations and pastors in general?

I sincerely believe that the main cause of indifference is that we have, first, not emphasized the Lutheran teaching of our Lord's real presence in the Sacrament enough; and, secondly, have been so insistent that the outward form of worship is unimportant that we have, rather than have a taint of what some might call Catholicism, become just another Protestant denomination.

A harsh accusation, I can hear someone say. Fellow Lutherans, that is not the intent of this writing. This is a constructive criticism. I'm tired of hearing people say, "There's no difference between the Lutheran Church and other churches." Or for the Lutheran name to mean to outsiders only that one is of German extraction. I'm convinced that the Lutheran interpretation of Scripture is correct. And if we have that conviction, we must go forward as Lutherans, neither Catholic nor Protestant.

We must go back to some of the practices which made us distinctive and not give them up because someone questions them. We must teach our people that our Lord is truly present, by faith [?], in the Sacrament. It must be so impressed that a Lutheran wouldn't consider receiving the Sacrament with another denomination. The practice of confession (either general or private) should be adhered to as taught in years past, together with absolution of the pastor by authority of the Office of the Keys. Not an abbreviated confession, practically omitting the absolution, as I have witnessed, and which is a definitely Protestant form.

Let us be Lutherans in faith, in practice, and in deed!

*A Lutheran Lieutenant*

The above article appeared in the *Lutheran Standard* (A. L. C.) of Dec. 30, 1944. We are happy to pass it on as a cheering testimony from a Lutheran layman who deeply loves the teachings of his Church. The statement that Christ is present in the Sacrament "by faith" was probably intended to express the thought that the Real Presence is not a matter of observation but of faith to us.

A.

---

## Theological Observer

---

**Summer School for Pastors at Seward, Nebr.**—In addition to advanced courses for teachers now serving congregations (three terms of three weeks each) and a special course for "so-called emergency teachers," our normal school at Seward is making plans for a pastors' summer school, which will be conducted for three weeks, from June 25 to July 13. "The plans include a special seminar on 'The Present Status of Union Endeavors,' conducted with the collaboration of Synod's Committee on Doctrinal Unity, as well as other courses of interest to the clergy." Besides, a three-day "institute for members of local boards for parish education will be conducted from July 24 to July 26 under the auspices of the Board of Education of the Southern Nebraska District." This institute will be open to pastors, teachers, and laymen. For further information, catalogs, rates, etc., address Prof. A. O. Fuerbringer, President, Concordia Teachers College, Seward, Nebr. A.

**A Most Urgent Request Pertaining to Work Among War Prisoners.** As the number of German war prisoners taken by our forces increases by the hundreds of thousands, so the task of the Lutheran Church of America in this war-made mission field is growing from day to day.

Lutheran civilian pastors, chaplains, and imprisoned *Pfarrer* are ministering to war prisoners in many camps in our country, but not nearly all have been covered. The Roman Catholic Church is following its Catholic prisoners behind the stockade but is also finding difficulty in keeping up with the growing and multiplying POW camps, since some of our men write that this Church is not represented in their camps and that some Catholic prisoners attend Lutheran services.

What is the attitude of the prisoners toward our work? This is a question often asked. The answer is: It varies. Generally speaking, we might say that the more recent arrivals are more favorable toward the advances of the Church than those who were taken longer ago, e. g., in the campaign in Africa; that older men are more inclined to attend Lutheran services than the younger; that the proportion attending is higher in the small side or work camps than in the large base camps. But all this is only generally true. A report for January from one of our pastors crosses our desk as we write this, stating that the attitude of the men attending is excellent, and we know that most of these are younger men. An average of 36 out of about 45 Lutherans at this side camp attend services and partake of Communion, and the pastor writes that they were overjoyed when he suggested that henceforth he would have a Catechism hour with them after each service.

On the other hand, we might take two larger camps not far from each other in neighboring States. In the one the atmosphere is one of courtesy and friendliness toward the chaplain and pastor but of indifference toward the services. From among hundreds of prisoners only a half dozen faithful ones attend divine services, but these come



regularly. In the other camp there prevails a friendly attitude toward pastor and services, and the attendance averages from 100 to 200.

But we endeavor not only to preach the Gospel to the German war prisoners as much and as often as possible, but also to provide them with Christian and general reading matter. Our German devotional booklets, Schwan's Catechism, *Kleines Gesang- und Gebetbuch*, and Christian tracts have entered the prison camps by the hundreds of thousands with the approval of the Censor's and the Provost Marshal General's offices. The *Lutheraner* is a special favorite. Hundreds of copies of Pieper's *Christliche Dogmatik*, Fuerbringer's *Evangelische Perikopen* and *Einleitung zum Alten und Neuen Testament*, Stoeckhardt's *Roemerbrief*, Nestle's Greek Testament, and many other theological books have been sent to the pastors and theological students in prison. Some of these are taking courses in the correspondence school of our St. Louis Seminary.

Many expressions of appreciation have been received from the pastors and other prisoners. Here is a recent letter:

"Sehr geehrte Herren,—Als Fuehrer der — Kompanie unsers Lagers teile ich Ihnen auf Bitten des der — Kompanie angehorigen evangelischen Lagergeistlichen Gefr. E— D— mit, dass ihm in letzter Zeit mehrfach Buecher theologischen und altsprachlichen Inhalts uebergeben worden sind, die von Ihnen zur Verfuegung gestellt wurden. Er dankt Ihnen fuer die geistliche und geistige Fuersorge, die Sie unserer evangelischen Gemeinde schon des oeffteren haben zuteil werden lassen. Besonders wertvoll war fuer ihn die Uebersendung von Piepers Christlicher Dogmatik. Ihre Zeitschrift 'Der Lutheraner' geht uns in 20 Exemplaren zu und wird gern gelesen."

Besides doing work in many prison camps in our country, your Commission is in touch with chaplains who are ministering to German war prisoners in Europe. There, too, the prison camps are increasing in number and growing in size week after week.

A chaplain in Headquarters, European Theater of Operations, writes on January 12: "This letter acknowledges with sincere appreciation both the receipt of your letter of November 13, 1944, and the shipment of supplies referred to therein. A portion of this shipment is now in our supply rooms and is being checked. The other parcels in this shipment are arriving daily. It will be hard for you to imagine the urgent need which exists here for this kind of printed matter for use with the thousands of Prisoners of War under the jurisdiction of this HQ. These items are very essential if we are to discharge fully our obligations to this ever increasing group of persons. Not knowing what you will be able to furnish in the future, we would like to make a 'blanket' request for all the religious printed matter which may become available to you for overseas shipment." He states that he is making use of German Lutheran pastors who are prisoners, and asks whether we could send for them Communion sets "up to one hundred and fifty."

Another chaplain writes from Europe: "Dear Brethren: To date I have received what I have previously ordered from your department. But the need is staggering here for more material. . . . I have several good Lutheran pastors, Germans, aiding me in my work, also a few theological students who need instruction and help. Now I would like

to have books so that these men may continue with their private study. . . . Send a 1,000 selection of hymns. — Our services are attended beyond all expectations. During December we had more than 17,000 in attendance. They are awakening to the fact that something has been lacking in their entire life. Officers request Bibles, Catechisms, prayer books, private discussions on religion. So, men, send the above request at once."

All is being done and every available source tapped to supply these urgent needs. But the supplies of any German books in our country are fast giving out. However there may be in the parsonages of our pastors and in the homes of our people German books which they would be willing to give up. Therefore, please send us German books in good condition and suitable for prisoners of war: small Bibles, New Testaments, devotional and prayer books, books on various topics, fiction, music, especially for four-part male voices, and, above all, also theological books for the prisoner *Pfarrer* and students. Do not send school-books nor old devotional booklets nor church periodicals, since current numbers are being provided. Send books only to:

#### LUTHERAN COMMISSION FOR PRISONERS OF WAR

c/o War Prisoners Aid of the Y. M. C. A.

33 East 47th St., New York 17, N. Y.

Additional information will be gladly given by our New York office at 231 Madison Ave. or by the undersigned field secretary of our St. Louis Office at 3558 S. Jefferson Ave.

CARL A. GIESELER

**Lutheran Unity and Diverse Cultures.** — *The Lutheran Church Quarterly* (January, 1945) approaches the problem of church unity from the viewpoint of the diverse cultures of the various Lutheran groups in our country, emphasizing the distinct contributions to be made to a truly united Lutheran Church by the different bodies professing Luther's name. He speaks of the German tradition, as seen in the Missouri Synod, which is characterized by Confessionalism and Aristotelian dialectics (*sic!*). This extremely conservative Lutheran group, he says, may be commended for its loyalty to conviction and its refusal to yield against conscience. It can contribute the value of positiveness and the courage of standing by unpopular principles. Missouri's firmness for doctrinal position is reflected in its parochial school system and its "closed" communion [rather "close communion"]. Far different from this tradition is the "Swedish culture" that is "characterized by a warm, evangelical type of Christianity which lays emphasis on the personal life of the believers." A representative of Swedish culture is Dr. Bergendoff, who is quoted as saying: "We are suspicious of a unity founded on theses. We believe that the love of Christ is a better bond of union, and that love is expressed in brotherly affection as well as in intellectual agreement. We yield to none in faith in the Word of God, and seek to regulate our life and work according to that Word, but we are willing to allow others as well as ourselves to define that Word. All our faith is in Christ, but we are not inclined to believe that all of Christ is given only to us. . . . Our vision of a united Lutheran Church is characterized by our

hope that the manifold gifts of God shall come to fuller expression in the larger opportunities afforded by a wider fellowship." This may serve as a commentary on Dr. Ryden's words cited just before: "Although the Augustana Synod does not defend unionism, it does believe that we must learn to co-operate with other Christian groups." Furthermore, there is the "Norwegian culture," whose "tradition emphasizes especially personal piety. There is among them a warmth of religion and a subjective expression of Christianity not found elsewhere." The writer quotes the Norwegian churchman Dr. T. F. Gullixson as saying: "Unity for the Lutheran church will center for the future as through the past in a common body of Christian teaching and in the spirit thereby engendered. No other common center is available and no other focus has the power to overcome those centrifugal, occupational, geographical, social, and nationalistic forces which are constantly at work." For the "Danish contribution" the writer quotes Rev. A. V. Neve, who describes Danish theology as "clear, distinguishing between essentials and non-essentials," as "progressive," and as having "the right balance between the Word and the Sacraments." The United Lutheran Church, the writer says, represents "American culture." "Usually called the liberal or progressive branch of the church, it is in a position to bring counterpoise to the extreme conservatism and nationalistic character of some of the other Lutheran groups. In a concluding paragraph the writer says: "It may be observed that the diversity of cultures, which in the past has been a retarding factor in Lutheran unity, can be the ground for the building of a church more truly American than any other Protestant body. An earnest hope is cherished by an increasing number of Lutherans that cultural lines may now converge and the contribution of each group enrich more fully than ever before the united fellowship." Is this "earnest hope" well founded? "Cultural lines" certainly must not be overlooked in the attempt at unifying the various Lutheran groups into one church body, for only then will the various Lutheran denominations understand and appreciate one another when they keep in mind the various historical backgrounds; indeed, only then will they exercise the patience, kindness, and readiness to assist each other in the process of adjustment. After all, however, the problem of church unity does not find its solution in the appreciation of the various denominational "cultures." Such cultures do not unify, but separate. As the writer shows, Missouri is "extremely conservative." Augustana "is suspicious of a unity founded on theses; it believes that the love of Christ is a better bond of union." In the Norwegian group there is "Pietism," a "warmth of religion," and a "subjective expression of Christianity." The Danish group desires a "progressive theology," while other groups may have still other emphases and demands. How, then, can these diverse cultural tendencies lead to true unity? As a matter of fact there is but one spiritually unifying principle, and that is the divine Word as set forth in our Lutheran Confessions on the basis of Scripture. The more earnestly and sincerely the various Lutheran bodies will concentrate on the study of the divine Word, seeking to be "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10) and "bringing into cap-

tivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5), the sooner true church unity will be granted to Lutheranism in our country by the grace of God. Indeed, only then! There certainly is much truth in the words of Dr. Gullixson: "Unity for the Lutheran church will center . . . in a common body of Christian teaching and in the spirit thereby engendered. No other common center is available and no other focus has the power to overcome those centrifugal, occupational, geographical, social, and nationalistic forces which are constantly at work. *Loyalty to a common body of Christian teaching has held us together and will continue to do so.*" (Italics ours.) J. T. M.

**The Present Situation in the Lutheran Church of America.**—When the American Lutheran Conference held its biennial convention last November, a notable address was delivered by the secretary of the Conference, Dr. L. M. Stavig, which has been printed in the January, 1945, issue of the *Lutheran Outlook*. One of its paragraphs reports on resolutions passed by various Lutheran bodies in 1944, and for its historical value, if for no other reason, it should be inserted here.

"Last January the Executive Committee of the American Lutheran Conference gave expression to this new emphasis and adopted a statement which was presented to each Lutheran body in America. This statement carried the following paragraph: 'We believe that the Minneapolis Theses, the Brief Statement and Declaration, and the Pittsburgh Agreement, all of which we believe to be in accord with one another, have treated sufficiently all essential points; we believe that no additional theses, statements, or agreements are at this time necessary for the establishment of pulpit and altar fellowship among Lutherans.' The Augustana Synod, the American Lutheran Church, and the United Danish Church have officially adopted this statement and made it their own. The Norwegian Lutheran Church in June unanimously adopted a resolution declaring: 'Because of the confidence born of association, conference and co-operation through many years, we extend our hand of fellowship to all American Lutherans who adhere to the historic standards and confessions of the Lutheran Church. We find their doctrinal declarations to be in essential accord with our own. We believe no additional theses, statements, or agreements are necessary for fellowship among American Lutherans. Wherever our congregations and pastors find those ties that bind Lutheran Christians, and that teaching and practice conform to official declarations, they may in good conscience practice selective fellowship both in worship and work.'

"The United Lutheran Church at its convention in Minneapolis last month declared with reference to this statement of the Norwegian Lutheran Church that they 'counted it of such character as to warrant the conclusion that we are now in fellowship with the Norwegian Lutheran Church, even as with the Lutheran Free Church and the Augustana Synod.' It must continue to be our devout purpose to secure recognition by all Lutherans of one another and to make possible free movement between pastors and congregations of all Lutheran groups. This is the most important task which just now confronts American Lutheranism and should be consummated at the earliest possible moment. The

developments within recent months give promise of the attainment of this goal within a reasonable time as between the American Lutheran Conference and the U.L.C.A. Let us work and pray that there may soon be equally definite progress as over against our brethren of the Missouri Synod."

A few comments should be appended. With respect to selective fellowship we have voiced our warning and misgivings before. Matters are chaotic enough without the addition of another dizzying factor. The so-called Overture for Lutheran Unity we have criticized, and we think, properly, for taking the position that adoption of a single one of the documents mentioned (Minneapolis Theses, Brief Statement and Declaration, and the Pittsburgh Agreement) should be a sufficient basis for fellowship of that body with any other Lutheran body. It would have been different if the Overture had stated that adoption by a Lutheran church body of all these documents would be a sufficient basis for fellowship with other Lutheran Synods. A statement of that kind would have created great rejoicing in Missouri Synod circles and, we are sure, in many other quarters where conservative Lutheranism is loved and cultivated. How greatly discussion and clarification with respect to doctrinal questions before fellowship is declared are needed has become evident the last months through the clashes in the American Lutheran Conference on the inerrancy of the Scriptures. Here a definite issue, not a new one, to be sure, but one of peculiar importance, has become prominent, and what folly would it not be if union were consummated before this point of controversy has been settled! That there are other matters on which there is a lack of mutual understanding and agreement became evident several years ago through attacks made in the organ of the Norwegian Free Church on the doctrinal stand of the Missouri Synod. A large united Lutheran front is a desideratum; we pray for it. But what is needed still more is undiminishing loyal witness-bearing to the grand truths which, taken from the Scriptures, are embodied in the Lutheran Confessions, having at their center Christ and the doctrine of justification by grace through faith. A.

**"Theology Today."**—With the issue of January, 1945, *Theology Today* ends the first year of its existence. Its editor is John A. Mackay of Princeton; its associate editor, H. T. Kerr, of the same seminary. It is published four times a year, namely, on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. Its business manager is L. J. Trinterud, P. O. 515, Philadelphia 5, Pa. Price, \$2. Of all theological publications in our country, outside perhaps of Lutheran periodicals, *Theology Today* at present will no doubt interest Lutheran students of scholarly tendency most. It evidently is a fruit of Brunner's work at Princeton Theological Seminary and represents the Barthian theological trend as this has been modified by Brunner and other men, some definitely conservative, others with a penchant for Liberalism. The periodical is neither Fundamentalist nor Modernist, but seeks to combine the traditional values of Reformed theology with the type that Karl Barth set in motion about a quarter of a century ago. The editorial council consists mostly of Princeton men and Presbyterian divines favoring present-day Princetonian the-



ology, but it includes also such outsiders as H. Richard Niebuhr, Yale Divinity School, Nels F. S. Ferré, Andover-Newton, and J. M. Richards, Columbia Theological Seminary. Among the contributors to the issue of January, 1945, we notice, among others, Prof. E. Lewis, Drew Theological Seminary; T. S. Eliot, an Anglo-Catholic; H. A. Johnson, an Episcopal clergyman. The editorials, with which each number begins, are written by Dr. Mackay. They helpfully characterize the special scope of each issue and fittingly introduce the articles and their authors. The fourth number, for instance, is dedicated to "God and Religion," in repudiation of man-exalting humanism, and endeavors to show that the Church of Christ, to play a worthy role today, must "abandon all by-paths from its duty and believe adventurously in God." Incidentally the editor remarks editorially that the response to the new publication has far exceeded all expectations. The articles are for the most part scholarly, timely, and stimulating. The review of current events, under the heading *The Church in the World*, is carefully edited, and the book reviews, which cover the most important recent theological publications, are well written. We recommend this publication to all students of modern theological trends, especially to those interested in the course which Barthianism is now taking in our country. But the periodical requires judicious reading, for it does not represent Christian orthodoxy, nor can conservative Lutheranism agree to its principles in general and its specific teachings in particular. The doctrinal content, wherever it shows positive confession, is basically Calvinistic; at the same time it cannot be identified with Reformed Fundamentalism. On page 493, for example, we read: "The Bible is not an oracle of divine principles to be applied to every age and condition. Rather, we must understand the methods whereby Biblical people found religious values. Much in the Bible is no longer applicable to our day." This characterizes, as the writer goes to show, the liberal type of Christianity, in contradistinction to the Roman Catholic and the "evangelical" type. But while the writer himself repudiates this "type of Christianity," as he also does the two other types, his own view of the Bible is not essentially different, for all he says of the Bible is: "The Bible is . . . a personal book which possesses the power to confront men with the living God. . . . The Bible is to be understood and taught genetically, historically, and experimentally, always remembering that the Holy Spirit alone can make the Bible the Word of God for the obedient" (p. 500 f.). This is the Barthian doctrine of Scripture, which is but a short step removed from Liberalism. The writer, of course, hastens to add: "While we teachers believe it to be the very Word of God, we must remember that this is the end-product of the Church's mature faith; it is the faith to which we have come after years of experience with the Word's power." In other words, the writer has no *a priori* belief in the Bible as the Word of God, but only a *posteriori* faith, which, as Dr. F. Pieper shows in his *Christliche Dogmatic*, is an essential departure from the traditional doctrine of the Church on the Bible as God's Word. Under the heading "Theological Humor" the editor of the department "The Church in the World" quotes from *The Presbyter*, "a journal of 'Confessional and Catholic Church-

manship," the following bit of theological verse, which was published "as a corrective against jargon, against oversolemnity in theology, and because we would be suspicious of any theology which was not strong enough to laugh at itself or to stand a bit of misrepresentation." There is, however, much truth in this subtle characterization of Barthianism:

### How to be Saved

#### Or Barthianism Simply Explained for the Bourgeois

The deceitful human heart  
Has been analyzed by Barth  
With the help of neo-Pauline terminology.  
His aim is to restore  
The crisis Either/Or  
As the fundamental concept of theology.

You will hear with apprehension  
That the dialectic tension  
Is the core of the Immediate Situation;  
And will understand the gravity  
Of Absolute Depravity  
Through an existential *ich-du* confrontation.

To understand the verse, the reader, of course, must know the fundamentals of Barthianism.

J. T. M.

**Criticism of Higher Critics.**—*The Living Church* (Episcopalian) recently published a series of four articles on *The Faith and Modern Criticism* (November, 1944), in which considerable concessions were made to the higher critics to the detriment (in particular) of the doctrine of Christ's person and work. To these articles Rev. A. C. Knowles, in the issue of January 14, 1945, replies in a manner that is worth considering in wider Christian circles. The writer, it is true, denies Verbal Inspiration, but his "criticism of the higher critics," upon the whole, is so good that we offer it to our readers for study. Apologist Knowles writes: "It is only fair to your readers and to churchmen generally to have them know that the Church has never accepted the conclusions of the higher critics and that the vast majority of its members still believe in the traditional faith in the Scriptures as the inspired and infallible Word of God. The Church is not 'fundamentalist,' is not bound to verbal inspiration, but definitely accepts the content of the Bible as God's revelation, to be received with faith, love, humility, and reverence, and, in the hard places, remembers that 'with God all things are possible.' The attacks of the critics are plain assumptions, which obviously could not be proved, such as that the Scriptural stories are myths and fables, that Moses did not write the Pentateuch, that there were several Isaiahs, and it is bordering on heresy that they suggest limitations of our Lord's knowledge. It is far easier to believe in the Bible than in the critics. I am not going to argue these and other attacks. I would only refer to the following as difficult hurdles for even agile critics: (1) that the Church, guided by the Holy Ghost, accepted the Scriptures as we have them and stamped her *imprimatur* upon them [if this refers to the historic witness of the Church in its fixing of the canon, it is correct]; (2) that for many centuries no doubt was cast upon the text or content; (3) that the Fathers and Theologians throughout the Christian era have accepted and quoted them; (4) that archaeological discoveries in Biblical lands have sustained the Scriptural accounts and proved the critics

wrong; (5) that the advance in scientific knowledge in no way affects the Bible, for God who created all things and ordained the laws of nature can change or suspend them at will; (6) that in the story of Adam and Eve (singled out for attack) the promise 'the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head' implies the Incarnation and Redemption (Our Lord being the Seed, the Blessed Virgin the woman) and that the 'Fall' is inherent [definitely confessed] in the Baptismal Office and the Burial Service; (7) that the critics do not agree and are often biased, since they attack that which sets forth doctrines they wish to deny; (8) that the Scriptures themselves carry conviction of their truth and have brought joy, comfort, and courage to multitudes; (9) that the critics would have no standing in a Law Court where we fancy the judge would say: 'Case dismissed; evidence conflicting and inefficient, petitioner biased.' As to our Lord's knowledge, the Church has always held that He had 'beatific knowledge' as God, 'acquired knowledge' as man, and in addition 'infused knowledge.' Whether He ever spoke with 'reserve' or 'accommodation' is not for man to inquire. No one, without danger of heresy, can question the completeness and fullness of our Lord's knowledge. He is God and Man, one Person, the Only-Begotten of the Father."—We wonder why Mr. Knowles, with the definite, conservative stand which he takes, presumes to deny Verbal Inspiration. Does he perhaps mistake verbal for "mechanical" inspiration? If the Scriptures are accepted as "the inspired and infallible Word of God," it is difficult to understand how Christian believers can ignore the Bible's own witness to Verbal Inspiration, as set forth in such Catechism passages as 2 Pet. 1:21; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; 1 Cor. 2:13; etc. When speaking of "our Lord's knowledge," the writer evidently shows the doctrinal confusion resulting from the blending of Reformed and Romanist teachings on this point. Our Lutheran theologians, following Scripture, ascribe a "beatific knowledge" only to angels, not to the incarnate Christ. For the expression "acquired knowledge" they would substitute "communicated knowledge," meaning by this term the knowledge which was imparted to the human nature of Christ by virtue of the *genus maiestaticum*. What the writer means by "infused knowledge" is not clear; but he is right in suggesting that Christ must not be accused of having spoken with "reserve" or "accommodation" in the sense that "as a child of His time" He taught erroneous views; for He Himself insisted that what He spoke is the truth (cf. John 8:32, 45; 14:6; 18:37; etc.). The apologist's last sentence is a vital confession and proves, as we believe, that there still are such in Episcopal circles as hold to positive Christian truth.

J. T. M.

**Protestantism's Long Ride on a One-Way Street Leading to Religious Indifferentism.**—Very regretfully *The Christian Century* (February 14, 1945) complains that "Protestantism in the United States has been taken for a long ride on a one-way street leading to religious indifferentism." It writes: "It [Protestantism] has been made the object of a systematic propaganda of good will toward other faiths, in particular, toward Catholics and Jews. It has accepted this propaganda on terms which have weakened its self-respect and inhibited its forthright wit-

ness to its own convictions." The article is directed against the recent Protestant-Romanist-Jewish co-operative endeavors in religion. "Intolerance," the article admits, "is bad ethics and bad strategy. But in the actual situation in which this organized movement to promote tolerance among these groups is carried on, the major responsibility for the exercise of that virtue falls upon Protestantism. This is due to the relative status of the three groups in American life. Protestantism has from the beginning been the preponderant religious factor in this country. Catholics and Jews have been minority groups." So "the major responsibility for the practice of religious tolerance in the United States rests upon Protestantism." But this has been bad for Protestantism. "It has been bad, not because it has caused Protestants to go too far in expressing the spirit of tolerance—there is no danger of that—but because it has evoked a false tolerance which has caused Protestantism, in deference to this supposed enlarging pool of good will, to depreciate and repress its own positive witness. That Protestants should have fallen victim to this false tolerance and that their churches should have welcomed its dissemination so widely, is a pathetic commentary on the vacuity of the Protestant mind with respect to both Christian truth and the Protestant heritage. It cuts the nerve of Protestant conviction. Any theory of a democratic society must take into account this fact ["Christianity is missionary from its roots up. It is operating under the conviction of a mandate to make disciples of all nations"], and with it, the cultural conflict arising inevitably from the profound differences between Christian Catholicism and Christian Protestantism. On neither side can the inalienable missionary purpose be suppressed by a hush-hush exhortation to good will—though, alas, Protestantism has been almost overborne by the sweet strains of this propaganda. But Protestantism must not allow its sense of responsibility for religious freedom for all others to betray its freedom to bear witness to its own faith. It must face the alternatives of the future. American culture is destined to become either Catholic, Protestant, or secular. Unless Protestantism is ready to surrender its priceless heritage, or to be robbed of it by its own default, it will overcome its false inhibitions and speak out on its own behalf. It will also begin with vigor to pull itself together into a unity of consciousness and of organization, without which its historical situation in American culture must be admitted to be precarious." Christian readers with positive convictions, sick and tired of the syncretistic Catholic-Protestant-Jewish religious love feasts, which have been carried on these past years, will no doubt be glad to read this stirring appeal to Protestantism to bethink itself of its priceless heritage and to assert itself over against Romanism. But what "priceless heritage" has this liberal writer in mind? And why should Protestantism, if really it has a "priceless heritage," not bear witness to it also over against the Jews? When the writer asks Protestantism to "pull itself together into a unity of consciousness and of organization," he does not point out to it its true weapon of defense and offense. Unless Protestantism in America is willing to return to the Word of God and to profess it without fear to all men, it is bound to go down before both secularism and Romanism. The very syncretism of

liberal Protestantism is its main weakness; yet, despite this fact, the writer closes his "call to arms" with the weakening concession: "When it [Protestantism] has thus set its own house in order, it will be able with renewed self-respect to invite Catholicism to join with it in making common cause against secularism in American society." Liberal Protestantism itself is destructively secularistic and therefore cannot rightly speak of fighting against "secularism in American society." As long as liberal theologians are not willing to accept the Gospel of Christ as the Lord gave it to us, all their religious talk about "priceless heritage," and the like, is but vain jangling.

J. T. M.

**Catholic Schools and Government Aid.**—*America* (February 17, 1945) very frankly pleads for government aid for its schools, in order to make it economically possible for Catholic parents to send their children to Catholic schools. The article closes with the words: "Our aim should be public recognition and public support of thoroughly Catholic schools. Unless we achieve this aim we have little hope of ever realizing our ideal, 'Every Catholic child in a Catholic school.'" Its argument for receiving government aid is strong and appealing, as a few paragraphs will show. Here is one: "The logic and justice of requesting a just share of tax-appropriated school moneys seems apparent to one willing to face the facts honestly. The Government compels Catholic children to attend school, but fails to provide a type of education which they in conscience can accept. Last year Catholics were taxed over \$416,000,000 for the support of public education, an average of \$89 per Catholic family. They were offered nothing in return but a form of education which violated their religious convictions; consequently many of them, rather than sacrifice their religious freedom, dug into their pockets a second time that they might provide a form of education which would satisfy their conscience, and thus saved the public over \$284,661,000 for current expense, interest, and capital outlay, in addition to a building program that would cost the public nearly a billion dollars had their children attended public schools." Again: "As tax-supported schools expand their programs more and more into the field of social service, Catholic children attending Catholic schools will be still further penalized. We do not have sufficient means to support all the educational needs of our children; hence the increased necessity of Government recognition and support of our schools. If guidance, placement, and occupational adjustment become part of the program offered at public expense, the young man or young woman in the Catholic secondary school is put at a disadvantage when it comes to finding employment. Every child is entitled to equal educational opportunity, but this right is denied to many a Catholic child under the present policy, in which the Catholic parent has to stand the entire cost of educating his own children in addition to contributing to the cost of education for his neighbor's children." The article of course presents the Roman Catholic side of the story. No one will deny that Catholics insisting on parochial schools are asked to make greater sacrifices than are religionists who are satisfied with the secular education offered in our state schools. But Lutherans, Reformed groups, and Seventh-Day Adventists are doing the same, and if they all de-



manded state support for their schools, there would be problems without end. In addition, Catholicism in our country is almost disgustingly aggressive. Its schools, colleges, universities, and other educational agencies are used in the interest of Romanist propaganda. Romanism thus represents a powerful minority insisting upon privileges which it will utilize to its own aggrandizement and — what is more — ultimately, in opposition to our very democracy and its prerogatives for our free citizens. It is just for this reason that non-Catholics are so very averse to considering Rome's plea for government support for its schools. Rome is not quite the martyr which it pretends to be, and there are just too many who know this.

J. T. M.

**Separation of Church and State Versus Rome's Attempts to Be a Political Factor.**—A correspondent of the *Christian Century* (Feb. 28, 1945) submits this interesting report: "A statement was last week addressed to President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill, and Premier Stalin by 1,600 church and religious leaders throughout the nation, which stated, 'Establishments of religion, however widely representative, however exalted, have no place at the council tables of the state.' Striking directly at the Roman Catholic temporal power, the signers declare: 'It is tragically significant that when, in 1929, the papacy re-entered the political field, it did so in alliance with enemies of those very cultures in which its church had thrived. As a political power it gained its first fatal successes in treaties of friendship with fascist powers. Supporting Mussolini in Italy, Dolfuss and Schuschnigg in Austria, Hitler in Germany, Franco in Spain, and Petain in France, the papacy has thrown its weight into the scales of the present human struggle on the side of the enemies of democracy.' The statement goes on to uphold the fundamental separation of government and church. Among the signers are John A. Mackay, Henry N. Wieman, Francis J. McConnell, Mark A. Dawber, Edwin McNeill Poteat, Pierre van Paassen, Raymond Robins, and Alva W. Taylor. A few days after the above statement was issued Archbishop Spellman of the Roman Catholic diocese of New York took the occasion of a welcome to 4,000 Boy Scouts at the cathedral to answer the Protestant clergymen. Declaring the statement to be a 'violation of the Golden Rule,' the archbishop urged the boys 'always to respect others and never lower yourselves to attack the beliefs of others.' Referring to the signers he said: 'It is difficult to believe that there are 1,600 ordained ministers and religious leaders in our country who would put their names to a document offering insult to 25,000,000 fellow Americans who are at least doing their share to win the war and serve their country and whose religion teaches them to love their neighbor.' The same week leaders of the National Conference of Christians and Jews declared they were 'gravely concerned' about the rising tensions between religious groups in the nation, as illustrated by the series of articles 'Can Catholicism Win America?' in the *Christian Century*, by the statement of the Roman Catholic hierarchy advocating that Protestants withdraw their missionaries from South America, and by widespread anti-Semitic feelings. The declaration continued: 'We recognize fully the deep and basic differences that exist. Americans dare not minimize these differences, nor gloss them over in the name of good will.' The confer-

ence proposes the following courses of action: (1) That Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish leaders meet nationally and locally to seek understanding and to arrive at methods for the alleviation of the tensions. (2) That Protestants, Catholics, and Jews work within their respective constituencies to re-examine their responsibilities for the causes of these tensions. (3) That religious leaders take the initiative in extending education in intergroup relations throughout the churches, schools, and civic agencies of the nation. (4) That for the good of our country and the world, Catholics, Jews and Protestants, while maintaining their right to differ, work together to solve the pressing economic, political, and social problems in which we all have a common stake."

We agree, of course, that we must live at peace with our neighbors. But this attitude must not become a steppingstone toward religious indifference.

A.

**Brief Items.**—Call for the Bible! Still the call comes from all over Europe for the Bible. For two years no Bible has been printed in Germany; but mimeographed pages of the Scripture are being circulated there. France's Bible Society calls for five thousand Bibles at once; Spain wants the Word; the people of Italy are asking our chaplains for it; and the Russian Government now permits the printing of the New Testament, within paper rationing limits. The American Bible Society is now having thousands of copies printed in Switzerland, and with the British Society it is printing more in Sweden. Which reminds me that the Presbyterian who visits New York and wants to see the sights will find one of the most interesting in Bible House, Fifty-seventh Street and Park Avenue.—*The Presbyterian*.

In New Zealand a book for use in the public schools having the title *Man and His World* is much discussed. A *Christian Century* correspondent writes, Dec. 13, 1944: "The education department has so far lain low and said nothing, and it seems likely that the storm will blow over without having affected the position of the book. It is undeniably written from a Humanistic viewpoint, but what else can one expect to find in a textbook used in an avowedly secular educational system?" The lesson is obvious.

"I have recently had the privilege of visiting the Holy Father and have found him aged, thin, and saddened since I have last seen him. Fifteen months of anxiety and pain have taken a heavy toll. No robust physical stature nor strong broad shoulders has the Pope to bear the sorrows of the world, but the Christlike figure, Christlike shoulders, and, above all, a Christlike sanctity and spirit seem to characterize him. It is impossible for me to see him without identifying, or rather paralleling, his life with the life of Christ and the cross of Christ, and today he reminds me of the wounded Christ." These outrageous words of Archbishop Spellman were brought to our attention by the Rev. John Sullivan.

As a gift to Dr. Albert Schweitzer on his 70th birthday, January 14, the Unitarian Service Committee has dispatched \$500 to him at his medical mission in East Africa.

According to the religious press, President John A. Mackay of Princeton Seminary has been chosen as president of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (Northern Presbyterians) to succeed Dr. Paul C. Johnston. Dr. Mackay has served as missionary in South America.

Dr. Rees Edgar Tulloss, president of Wittenberg College, Springfield, O., has been elected President of the National Lutheran Council, Dr. William G. Sodt, administrator of the Milwaukee Hospital, was elected Vice-president, Dr. Martin Anderson of the Norwegian Lutheran Church, Chicago, was elected Secretary, and Mr. S. Frederick Telleen was re-elected Treasurer.

The *Christian Century* correspondent in England reminds us that "It is one hundred years since John Henry Newman left the Church of England and Ernest Renan the Church of Rome."

"Our Latin-American neighbors fear us. . . . They see that at the termination of this war not one Catholic power will be left. There will be two great non-Christian powers, and two powers that have grown out of Protestant traditions. There is great fear for the future."—From an article entitled "U.S. Catholics Study Latin-America" in *America* (R. C.).

*The Living Church* (Feb. 25, 1945, p. 10) reports the death of a prominent theologian of the Lundensian school. "Dr. Hjalmar Holmquist, Professor of Theology at the University of Lund, and one of Sweden's best-known religious leaders, died at the age of 72. Dr. Holmquist took an active part in church work and conducted several preaching and lecturing tours in Denmark, Norway, and Finland. One of his most successful books, *Martin Luther*, was translated into several languages."

We have given many hours and held any number of conferences on Evangelism. We have discussed and re-discussed methods and flooded ourselves with literature. Meanwhile, we have forgotten that the answer can only be in our hearts. Method and machinery without individual fervor are like formality in worship when devotion has languished. Methods are like the letter that kills. It is the Spirit that maketh alive. It is only the constraining love of Christ that can give vitality to our message and drive to our method.—E. C. Herrick, president of the Andover-Newton Theological School at Newton Center, Mass., in the *Watchman-Examiner* of Jan. 11, 1945.

"We have no conception of the difficulties concerning some of these parish priests. It is known that one priest has 75,000 people under his jurisdiction. There are others with 45,000 and 25,000. In Peru, for example, a priest has to be versatile to handle the many problems. In the cities of Peru, he must understand people of the twentieth century, but in the Peruvian hinterland he deals with sixteenth century situations."—From an article entitled "U.S. Catholics Study Latin-America" in *America* (Rom. Cath.) for Jan. 6, 1945.

The Blue Network has given to the American Council of Christian Churches another series of broadcasts covering the months of March, April, and May, every Friday from 8:15 to 8:30 A.M. Eastern War Time.—*Christian Beacon* (Bible Presbyterian). A.

---

## Book Review

---

All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis 18, Mo.

**The Glory of Golgotha.** Lenten Sermons from the Works of Dr. George Stoeckhardt, Translated by the Rev. William Burhop, and "Passion Story Pictures" by Dr. Louis J. Sieck. Concordia Publishing House. 125 pages.  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ . \$1.00.

This book of Lenten sermons is unique in two respects. It is unique inasmuch as it presents sermons of two members of the Concordia Seminary faculty of different periods of time: Dr. George Stoeckhardt, in his day the outstanding professor of exegesis of the St. Louis Seminary faculty, who lectured on Old and New Testament exegesis at the Seminary, beginning in 1879, while he was still pastor of Holy Cross Church, and from 1887 till 1913 as a regular member of the faculty; and Dr. Louis J. Sieck, the present incumbent of the presidential chair of Concordia Seminary at St. Louis, who for thirty-eight years had been pastor of Zion Lutheran Church at St. Louis, first as assistant to the sained Pastor C. F. Obermeyer and, after his death, in full charge of the very large congregation. Dr. Sieck has long been known as a preacher of ability. This book is also unique inasmuch as the Rev. William C. Burhop, pastor of Calvary Lutheran University Church of Madison, Wis., has made Dr. Stoeckhardt of Saxon birth speak English by reproducing in English Dr. Stoeckhardt's pithy German style. The book needs no further recommendation.

J. H. C. FRITZ

**The Loci Communes of Philip Melancthon.** By C. L. Hill. Meador Publishing Co., Boston. 274 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$ . \$3.00.

It is with genuine delight that the reviewer greets this excellent edition of Melancthon's *Loci Communes* with its fine, scholarly translation; for not only does it possess great intrinsic worth, but it is the first time in the history of the Protestant Church of our country that a translation of this forgotten classic has been attempted. And the honor goes to a Negro, who is a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and who by this translation wishes to show his gratitude not only to his beloved Philip Melancthon, but also to the two Lutheran schools, Wittenberg College and Hamma Divinity School, at which he did his college and seminary work. Dr. Charles Leander Hill, formerly dean of Turner Theological Seminary, is now professor of philosophy, Morris Brown College, Atlanta, Ga. Very painstakingly Dr. Hill prepared himself for his severe task. With a scholarship to study abroad, he went to the University of Berlin for graduate research. He spent (as he tells us) several weeks in intensive research at the Luther House in Wittenberg, Germany, and altogether fourteen years on the study of Melancthon, his work and theology. The translation was done on the basis of Kolde's last edition of Plitt's monumental text, which again was diligently collated with that contained in the well-known *Corpus Reformatorum* as also with Spalatin's German version.

Finally, all these texts and codices were compared with the original manuscript, kept in the Ducal Library of Gotha. Besides the *Loci*, the book contains a helpful preface, a fitting introduction by Dean E. Flack of Hamma Divinity School, a "Critical Estimate of the Character and Influence of Melanchthon and of His Contribution to the History of Thought," a "History of the Formation and Character of the *Loci Communes* up to 1521," Melanchthon's "Dedicatory Epistle," and a "Bibliographia Melanchthonia," which is both comprehensive and helpful. What the reviewer wishes to see in a new edition (which he hopes will appear soon) would be (besides, perhaps, a re-study of Luther's theology in relation to that of Melanchthon) careful proofreading to eliminate a number of errors, a subject index, covering especially the *Loci*, and the translation of all Greek, Latin, and German quotations, since today students are prone to by-pass whatever is not written in English (*pudeat istos*). May all colleges, seminaries, libraries, and as many scholars as possible order copies of this most valuable work, so that a new and revised edition may soon become necessary. Of course, the reader must not expect too much of the *Loci*; for let him bear in mind that the author, though remarkably precocious, was only twenty-four years old when he wrote this first Protestant dogmatic. Melanchthon's theological *Ausreifung* took place especially when he was obliged to write the Augsburg Confession and its Apology; a decade of hard study and of almost incessant polemics proved most helpful to the maturing *Praeceptor Germaniae*. What Melanchthon, for example, writes on Offense, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and other doctrines, is still woefully inadequate. The *Loci* of 1521, however, show that he had by this time fully grasped the central tenet of the Reformation, the *sola fide*, and his confutation of the Pelagianism of Medieval Theology proves how thoroughly he had discarded its outmoded dialectic. On the other hand, already in the *Loci* of 1521 he manifests his natural tendency to philosophize and rationalize as also the beginning of a Protestant renaissance of intermingling *revelatio et ratio*. Melanchthon still stands foursquare on Scripture (cf. the vigorous closing paragraph of the *Loci*, in which he declares that "human commentaries on sacred things ought to be shunned as though they were a pest, because the teaching of the Spirit cannot be purely drawn from anything save the Scriptures," p. 267), but he is not the devoted *Schrifttheologe* that Luther was, who in all his teaching of theology went only as far as the declared Word of Scripture and was willing to teach side by side two plainly revealed Scripture doctrines, even though they seemed to contradict each other. Melanchthon's endeavor to harmonize divine providence and human responsibility explains his later synergism, though personally he always appealed to divine grace for salvation. Luther's generous praise of the *Loci* must be viewed in the light of his habitual kindness toward his co-laborers, by which he appreciated in all their efforts great merit even though these had serious faults. In his Introduction Dean Flack characterizes Luther as "bold and boisterous" and Melanchthon as "quiet, kind, and conciliatory, a man of peace." Upon the whole, this distinction holds, but Luther, too, showed himself wondrously kind and conciliatory in all cases where the Gospel was not at stake, while



Melanchthon, quiet and peaceful though he was in general, often was extremely stubborn toward those who opposed him. Especially in the "Critical Estimate" there occur statements which could be challenged. The translator himself is strongly Melanchthonian (cf. his words: "In Melanchthonianism I see what seems to me to be the true Evangelical tradition of the Gospel," p. 8) and his high regard for the theology of Melanchthon and his evident dislike for the "pure Lutheran tradition" (p. 33) are reflected in many of his judgments, which can hardly be accepted as true (cf. especially the last part of the "Brief Biographical Sketch," pp. 25 ff., where the issues at times are not adequately represented; also the "Critical Estimate," pp. 433 ff., which raises weighty questions requiring more detailed discussion). Over against the theologians which the translator quotes (e. g., Herrlinger, Dorner, Thomasius, Kahnis, Luthardt, Schenkel, and others) we would suggest to him the unbiased study of Dr. F. Bente's scholarly and original research in his "Historical Introductions to the Symbolical Books" (*Concordia Triglotta*, pp. 1-256; especially pp. 209-228), which presents a far different Luther than church historians commonly picture. But all this does not mean that the translator has not accomplished a great and noble task. The reviewer is sure that scores of students will be thankful to him for having published this classic of the Reformation. Nor does it mean that his introductory articles, on which clearly he has spent much time and energy and which in general evince painstaking and brilliant research, do not contain valuable and reliable information. Dr. Hill's work on behalf of Melanchthon's *Loci* is truly monumental and should encourage Lutheran scholars to wrest from oblivion other great treasures of Lutheran theology that lie buried in the Latin and German of the past.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

**The Westminster Dictionary of the Bible.** By John D. Davis. Revised and rewritten by Henry Snyder Gehman. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia. 658 pages (exclusive of "table of maps," map index, and 16 maps of Bible lands), 6¾×9½. \$3.50.

Many Bible students no doubt desire frank and unreserved information on this revised edition of *Davis' Bible Dictionary*. The book appeared first in 1898 and was followed by revised editions in 1903, 1911, and 1924. Explaining this new revision, the editor, Dr. H. S. Gehman, professor of Old Testament Literature and chairman of the department of Biblical Literature, Princeton Seminary, and Lecturer in Semitic Languages, Princeton University, writes in the Preface: "So many advances have been made in Biblical studies since the time of Dr. Davis that the book had become thoroughly antiquated in philology, archaeology, the history of the ancient Near East, Biblical geography, and Old and New Testament criticism" (p. V). This is a rather sweeping statement and deserves considerable modification. There is, for example, relatively little new material in the geography and the history of Bible lands, while there is hardly any in the realm of philology. By far the bulk of *Davis' Bible Dictionary* has been retained, and numerous articles have been neither changed nor rewritten. But there is one department in which the reader will notice a considerable change—though not for the better—and

that is in the field of Old and New Testament criticism. Dr. Gehman writes (in the Preface): "He [the editor] has relied upon the best authorities of our time, and his object has been to produce a work which, within his limitations, will be accurate and authoritative in statement and content, and of constructive value for students of the Bible" (p. V). Unfortunately, these "best authorities" belong into the class of "radical higher critics," and the editor's diligent study of their works is reflected in changed attitudes in the very region in which the helpless Bible student is looking for safe and reliable guidance. The higher critic is given a chance to have his say, while eminent believing scholars of great fame, such as Drs. R. D. Wilson, F. Petrie, M. G. Kyle, and others, who testified against higher criticism in its destructive form are simply ignored. The editor, of course, does not entirely disregard the traditional Christian view of the Bible and its books, but everywhere scholars of liberal tendency have the right of way, and among these are men like J. A. Montgomery, G. A. Barton, W. F. Albright, J. H. Breasted, A. T. Olmstead, C. C. Torrey, Millar Burrows, and others. The result is that the Bible student is confused and misled, for the impression made upon him is that after all not conservative Christian belief, but the views of modern unbelieving Bible critics are to count. A few examples will illustrate. Under *Daniel* the editor writes: "Daniel belongs to the late period and could very easily be assigned to the 2d century B.C.," though he admits: "Some excellent modern scholars continue to date the book in the time of Daniel in the 6th century" (p. 129). But why pass by in this connection the valuable work done by Drs. Wilson and W. H. Green in defense of the conservative side? Again, evidently relying on G. A. Barton, a radical higher critic, for his data on Jeroboam (cf. *Religion of Israel*), the editor judges that Jeroboam, in instituting calf worship anew, was "influenced more by the desire to adhere to ancient traditions" (than by downright apostasy) and that the calf, in agreement with the idolatrous patterns of the land, served merely as the throne of the invisible Jehovah, who thus was worshiped as seated on the bull of gold. This is said after he has stated that Jeroboam had been in Egypt and there had probably (no doubt) witnessed the worship of the Apis Bull, which evidently put this idolatrous notion into his mind. Under *Canon* we read: "It may be concluded that the Law was canonized c. 444 B.C.; the Prophets, c. 200 B.C., and the Writings, c. 100 B.C." This view of the higher critics has been successfully countered by Drs. Green and Wilson and proved unfounded in fact and history, but here it is put down as quite probable. Of the last twenty-seven chapters of *Isaiah* the editors write: "The traditional view, which is still held by some scholars, ascribes them to *Isaiah*, but at the present time the great majority of even conservative critics ascribe them to Deutero-*Isaiah*; chaps. 40 to 55 to Deutero-*Isaiah* and chaps. 56 to 66 to Trito-*Isaiah*" (p. 269). The arguments of Dr. Davis for the unity of the book are then added, but these are followed by statements which suggest the opposite conclusions, and the closing words of Dr. Davis are omitted: "The Church has always believed in predictive prophecy and in the inspiration of *Isaiah*." The same treatment is accorded the New Testament books. The articles contributed by Drs. G. T. Purves

and B. B. Warfield have been rewritten by Dr. B. M. Metzger, assistant professor of the New Testament at Princeton Seminary, in such a way as to give higher criticism the "go" sign. "Form criticism" and the theory of "Aramaic originals," which Dr. Gehman regards as a "refreshing contribution to New Testament studies," are given considerable attention, while the historic teaching of the Christian Church that the Gospels in Greek are original and authoritative is ignored. The article on the Johannine authorship of the fourth Gospel, written by Dr. Purves, gave clear and distinct testimony that it was written by John the Apostle, but in the revision this witness is greatly toned down. The absolute certainty which characterized *Davis' Bible Dictionary* is definitely lacking in this revision and there is, in addition, an insertion of liberal doubts with regard to the authorship of the various Bible books which is most regrettable. Thus Dr. Davis' positive insistence on the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is wanting; the new article shows a decided change of attitude toward the liberal view. Concessions are made to unbelief which certainly would have been rejected by Dr. Davis. It seems unfair to the reviewer for anyone to revise a Bible dictionary, or any other book for all that, in a spirit foreign to the original and yet have the revision bear the writer's name. In this case the title is indeed new, but the words: "By John W. Davis" will mislead many a Bible student to believe that here is his old, beloved Bible dictionary revised in the spirit of the cherished Bible teacher, while in reality his spirit of faith and devotion to God's Word is no longer there. Let those who are willing to make concessions to Liberalism write a new Bible dictionary, in which they may disseminate their views; but let such eminently helpful and trustworthy works as *Davis' Bible Dictionary* be allowed to continue their blessed mission serving those to whom God's unadulterated truth is still precious. JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

**Behind Barbed Wires.** Among War Prisoners in Germany. By Erik R. Berg. Translated from the Swedish by Oscar N. Olson. Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island, Ill. 95 pages, 5½×8½.

At the present time both pastors and members of congregations are much concerned about prisoners of war everywhere and particularly also in Germany. Although the accounts presented in this collection of episodes stop approximately with March, 1943, they may be assumed to present conditions as they obtain to this day. Which means that people of our country and members of our congregations who have relatives in prisoner of war camps in Germany may gain some insight into the life which these unfortunate men are living at the present time. For obvious reasons the descriptions are very general, in most instances making the identification of the respective camps impossible. Yet the author has managed to give his descriptions a touch of real life, with a large amount of pathos, to be sure, but also with encouraging features. It is unfortunate that parts of the story are filled with the idea of a mixture of religions, apparently a concomitant of the work as supervised by the International Y.M.C.A., but this fact does not harm the book as such. All those who wish to get some first-hand information regarding the life and habits of war prisoners in Germany will find this book valuable.

P. E. KRETZMANN